

June 19, 2016

IT'S THE REAL BEAST MODE!

1 Samuel 17

INTRODUCTION

It was Friday, October 27, 2006. Laurie and I were visiting our friends, Mike and Dee Riley in Oregon. Mike was then the football coach at Oregon State University. His team had been a little disappointing. There had been expectations the team would do well but they had won 3 games and lost 4. Most had expected more from that team. Unfortunately their prospects for immediate improvement were more than a little gloomy. The next day they would play the USC Trojans. SC was undefeated. In fact they had not lost a regular season game in more than 3 years. They had won 38 straight regular season games. As you can imagine the Trojans were heavily favored to win. No one seriously thought Oregon State had a chance.

That night Oregon State had a chapel service in which the speaker recounted the familiar story of David and Goliath. He used it to encourage the players to trust God but also to play the next day without fear as they faced a college football giant. One of the players took the lesson to heart. The next day he found a small stone and put it in his sock before the game to remind him of David. After the chapel there was a team snack time. I was sitting at a table with Mike talking about the upcoming game. We talked about the many strengths of the USC team, but also about Mike's team. I asked him what he really thought was going to happen the next day. Without a hint of hesitation and with absolute conviction he said, "I think we're going to beat them."

I thought it was another example of Mike's characteristically positive, upbeat spirit. I didn't tell him this but I also thought he was in for a disappointment, no matter how firmly convinced he was. That next day his team battled toe to toe with their giant opponents, giving them everything they had and then some in a thrilling game that was decided in the final 7 seconds. In the end David once again pulled off the upset as Oregon State proved their coach right, winning 33-31.

The story of David and Goliath is so familiar that it is a part of our culture. It is the standard analogy for a hopeless underdog facing an enemy that is overwhelmingly more powerful. That is, as we will see, a story we love to hear. We want the underdog to win. But this story is more than an underdog story. It certainly is that, but it is also more. Let's look at 1 Samuel 17.

EXPOSITION

GOLIATH INTIMIDATED GOD'S PEOPLE

The Philistines lived on the coastal plain of Canaan. They were a constant thorn in Israel's side, raiding them and threatening their western flank. Israel had demanded a king in part to deal with this on-going threat. Once again the Philistines mounted an invasion force, and once again King Saul led his army out to meet them in battle.

The armies confronted each other on a fertile plain called the Valley of Elah. Both armies established positions on high ground, leading to an uneasy stalemate. Neither side wanted to leave its strong position on high ground to risk attacking the other on ground advantageous to the enemy, so a stare down resulted as both held position. The Philistines came up with a strategy they were sure would work to break the stalemate in their favor. They sent out their most fierce and intimidating warrior who challenged Israel to send their best man out in single combat. This was to be an early form of UFC, minus the cage and referee.

This was not unknown in the ancient east, though more common farther to the west. The Philistines were originally a sea-faring people from the west so it is possible they brought the idea with them. The theory was that the single combat would vastly reduce bloodshed as the death of one man would decide the issue. However, it usually didn't work that way, as the armies would usually fight anyway. I cannot prove this, but I suspect intimidation was a major part of the motivation of the Philistines in making this move. I believe that they were sure that Israel had no one who could match up with their champion. I think their hope was that Israel would either be so cowed by the Philistine warrior that they might even leave the field altogether, or failing that the Israelis would be so frightened they would be defeated before any battle ever began.

The man the Philistines sent out as their champion was a truly intimidating specimen. His name, as we all know, was Goliath, a name is now synonymous with being enormous and powerful, maybe even undefeatable. The *Jerusalem Post* reported in 2005 that Aren Maier, head of the archaeology department of Bar Ilan University in Israel, had found a ceramic shard at the site of the ancient Philistine city of Gath that had the name Goliath written on it. It was dated around 1000 B.C. It suggests Goliath may have been a common name in that culture. Our text tells us that the Goliath in question stood six cubits and a span, which works out to over 9 ½ feet tall. There is some debate about that. There were a couple of ancient texts that said he stood 4 cubits and a span tall. That would be around 6'9" tall. It is

difficult to know which text had the correct figure. However, in the end it doesn't really make that much difference.

The average Israeli man of that day stood under 5 feet 6 inches tall. Even if the lesser number was correct for Goliath that meant he towered over everyone else in the field by more than a foot. I am average height for an American man today. When I was just out of college I got to know a guy that played basketball for UCLA. His name was Ralph Drollinger, and he was 7 feet tall. When I was with him he was so much taller than me that I felt like a little kid. That's how the Israelis felt when they were confronted with Goliath.

Goliath wasn't just tall. He wore bronze armor that according to verse 5 weighed 5000 shekels, which comes to 125 pounds. In other words, the dude was strong. He was broad and bulky. The Seattle Seahawks had a running back named Marshawn Lynch who was so strong, such a punishing runner, they called him the Beast. He would just run right through would be tacklers. When he got going they said he went into Beast Mode. Goliath was the real Beast Mode, except with him wasn't just a game at stake. If you went up against him, to quote Vasili from *The Princess Bride*, death was on the line. Beast Mode had the desired effect. Verse 11 says, "on hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified." In fact, according to verse 24, "whenever the Israelites saw the man, they all fled from him in great fear." Every morning Beast Mode would show up in the west and to a man the Israelis, led by their king, would head east.

DAVID SAVED THE DAY

Enter David. At this point he is nothing but the youngest brother in his family. Three of his older brothers are in the Army with Saul. They are in the front lines among the troops being intimidated by Goliath day after day for more than a month. David is too young to be a part of the Army and he is viewed by his brothers as pretty much a punk kid.

David is sent by his dad to bring some supplies to his brothers on the front line. But when he arrives he observes what happens in the morning when Beast Mode comes out and issues his challenge. Everyone else is looking for a rock to hide behind, but David is outraged. He says at the end of verse 26, "who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" David isn't asking about Beast Mode's identity. He's saying "Who does that dirty, worthless Philistine think he is?" Just asking the question is a rebuke. David is reminding soldiers who they are and who their God is. The implication is that no one should be afraid of this uncircumcised Philistine because God is on their side.

He asks what would be done for the man who kills the Philistine? Again, merely asking the question implies that he is up to the task.

You know that David's brothers would be irked by their brash little brother. It was easy for David to talk big because he was in no danger. No one expected him to do anything about Beast Mode. David's brothers have already viewed him as an annoying little brother. And now the little imp is in the front lines criticizing them and in effect boasting that he can do what they're afraid to do. They're fed up with his act. Verse 28 tells you all you need to know about how they feel about little David. The oldest brother says, "I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle." Wow. David is conceited and wicked. I'd say Eliab is more than a little peeved.

David's response is the classic younger brother's lament. "Now what have I done? Can I even speak?" Can't you just hear the poor little brother complaining about the fact that he always gets dumped on by the older brothers? No matter what he says it's always wrong. He's always the one that's too young, whose opinion doesn't count. He's the one who's always told when he speaks up that children should be seen and not heard. My heart goes out to him. Been there done that.

Apparently what David said was reported to Saul for the King had him brought to him. Saul was hopeful that there was an answer for Beast Mode until he saw the kid. When the shepherd boy showed up his heart sank. David tells the king in verse 32, "let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine, your servant will go and fight him." Saul thought that was the most ridiculous thing he'd ever heard. Here's this teenager whose big fight is with acne, boasting he's not afraid of Beast Mode. I'm sure he thought David had a lot of heart, but he also thought if he fought Beast Mode the giant was going to cut that heart out. Saul essentially responded, "there's no way that's happening, kid. There are no points in this battle for losing bravely." But David related to him how he had fought off a bear while tending the sheep and killed a lion as well, and insisted if he could kill a lion and a bear then he can sure take on some dumb Philistine. Saul, desperate to have some answer to Beast Mode, takes him up on it. I have no doubt he thought this was probably hopeless, but David was the only man in Israel willing to even try to fight Goliath. Saul gave David his own personal armor to wear in the battle but David couldn't wear it. It was too uncomfortable for him.

You know the story. David picks up some rocks and puts them in his shepherd's bag, takes his staff in his hand and goes out to do battle with Goliath. When he shows up Beast Mode mocks him. The text says he despised him. In his mind this

pip squeak was a joke. He says, “am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks? Come here and I’ll give your flesh to the birds of the wild animals!”

I would have been shaking in my sandals if I were in David’s place. The dude was scary looking and huge, and he was really good at trash talking. David didn’t even flinch. According to verse 45 he answered, “you come against me with 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’ll strike you down and cut off your head.” Man, that is some world-class taunting. David’s heart is revealed by what he says in verse 47, “all those gathered here will know that is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord’s, and he will give all of you into our hands.” His biggest concern was not his own safety, but that people would know how great his God was.

David put a rock in his sling and began whirling it as Goliath approached. Ancient Middle Eastern shepherds were known to often be amazingly good with a sling. It is reported that a good slinger could whirl his sling around at more than six times a second and then fire the rock at the target at speeds faster than a major league pitcher can throw a ball. David’s aim was unerring. He nailed Goliath square in the forehead and the big man went down like an old oak tree that’s been felled. Scratch one giant. Fight over. David grabbed the big man’s sword and cut off his head, and the rout was on.

The Philistines, certain that no one could stand up against Goliath, thought the big guy could intimidate Israel so badly they would run away. Up to that day they had been right. Surely it was only a matter of time, they thought, until the Israelis’ spirits were completely broken and they gave up altogether. But that day the Philistine strategy worked exactly in reverse. When David, a little Israeli shepherd boy, took out Goliath they were shocked and shaken to their core. This was the first and briefest shock and awe campaign in history. To the Philistines it appeared that the Israelis didn’t even need a soldier to terminate Goliath. They were so confident they sent a nearly unarmed kid out to fight the best the Philistines had and he took out their champion in seconds. If a little Israeli kid could do that what could their soldiers do? The entire Philistine Army broke and ran. The Israelis pursued them all the way to their fortress.

IMPLICATIONS

What an appropriate passage for Father's Day. If most of us men were totally honest with ourselves and others we'd admit we feel like we are also overmatched.

Life is demanding from us more than we have. We have a fearsome fight and we're not sure we have what it takes to win. All of us, men and women, are going to fight our own Goliaths in life. All of us have our own fears that we will have to face. All of us have those intimidating enemies in life that cause us to cower and run. What is it that you fear? What is your Beast Mode? Maybe you look at what is happening in our nation, you see that in a frighteningly short period of time being a Christian in our society has gone from being an admirable thing to being a despised and ridiculed thing, and you fear the future. Writer and UC Berkeley law professor says that the overwhelming majority of those in positions of authority in government, in courts, in education, in the media do not believe in God, and in fact are committed to removing the idea of God from having any role or presence in our society. We are seeing that work our right before our eyes. This is a battle we all face. There are some things that we can learn from David that will help us to deal with our Beast Modes.

DAVID DID NOT FIGHT ON GOLIATH'S TERMS

Writer Malcolm Gladwell wrote a book a couple of years ago titled, *David and Goliath*. In it his thesis was that David wasn't as much of an underdog as is often assumed. Gladwell claims it is likely that Goliath suffered from a medical condition that accounted for his great height. This condition, called acromegaly, has some side effects including vision problems. Gladwell believes that Goliath may have suffered from double vision, or severe nearsightedness, and couldn't see David very well. Furthermore, he claims that David's ability with the sling could be equated to an artillery unit in today's military. He asserts that the stone David fired at Goliath had the stopping power of a .45 caliber bullet. If that's true, the David and Goliath story is actually the story of the giant bringing a sword to a gunfight. It's like that scene in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* where Indiana Jones is confronted in the street by an imposing, intimidating enemy dressed in black who flourishes a saber in impressive fashion prior to using it to kill Indiana. The hero watches this display unfazed, then calmly pulls out a gun and shoots the guy. Gladwell claims that's like what David did. In terms of sheer size and strength David was a big time underdog. But he upended his underdog status by using unexpected tactics that flipped the odds in his favor.

I believe that Mr. Gladwell has overstated his case. The stone and sling are not close to a .45 caliber gun. I think the evidence for a medical condition and poor vision for Goliath is flimsy at best, and actually is quite unlikely. Goliath would not have been much of a fighter no matter how big he was if he couldn't see his opponent. Furthermore Gladwell has overstated the case for David's ability with the sling. If it was that much of a mismatch, someone would've thought of that

sooner. Someone would've said, "hey, I know how we can defeat this enormous guy. Let's get somebody in here who is really good with the sling. Dirty Goliath won't have a chance against him." That didn't happen because sling versus warrior was not that open and shut of a case.

It's always important to consider context when you're interpreting a passage of Scripture, and the context of this story suggests that using a sling wasn't a terrific idea. This incident did not revolutionize warfare. Armies didn't begin training and deploying sling regiments that could devastate oncoming enemies before they were able to close with the infantry. After this Saul didn't put David in charge of the new First Sling Division for the Israeli Army. That didn't happen because everyone knew this was a lucky, nearly miraculous shot. In one classic David and Goliath moment from sports history, in his speech to the 1980 US Olympic hockey team, which filled the role of David against the Goliath of the seemingly invincible Soviet team, Coach Herb Brooks said, "If we play them 10 times, they will win 9. But not this game." Everyone was sure if David fought Goliath 100 times he would lose 99 times, sling notwithstanding. But not this time.

Having said that, I think Mr. Gladwell is on to something. He is right that part of David's genius was that he didn't fight Beast Mode on his terms. A man from Harvard named Ivan Arreguin Toft has written a book titled *How The Weak Win Wars*. He studied the last 200 years of military history and identified many conflicts in which a weak opponent faced a much stronger opponent. He found that when the weaker side used unconventional strategies and tactics that played to their strengths and the weakness of the stronger foe, they won two thirds of those wars.

Gladwell gave an example of that principle at work in a much less dire situation. There is a man named Vivek Ranadive who came to this country from India. He started a high-tech company called Tibco, that has been tremendously successful. In fact, he now owns the NBA Sacramento Kings basketball team, but he had an interesting beginning in basketball. He lives in the Silicon Valley area. When his daughter, Anjali, was 12 she wanted to play basketball. She joined a basketball team but it had no coach, there were only two girls on the team that were serious basketball players, and the rest of them had never played the game. Vivek had never played the game either but he didn't let that deter him. He took on the task of coaching the girls whom he described as a bunch of little blonde girls from Silicon Valley. They weren't tall, they couldn't shoot and they couldn't dribble very well. How were they supposed to compete against teams that were bound to be taller and much better basketball players? He came up with a plan. He had always thought it

curious that basketball teams typically concede three quarters of the court. After they make a basket they would retreat all the way back to their end of the court, letting the other team bring the ball up uncontested. In his mind this was the equivalent to a football team allowing the other team to advance the ball to their opponents' 30 without even trying to stop them. He decided that his girls would contest every inch of the court. They decided that their weapons would be superior conditioning and ferocious defensive tenacity over every inch of the court every minute of the game. They would run and scramble and defend everywhere. Under their unrelenting pressure teams that were far superior, much more skilled, fell apart. They defeated opponent after opponent simply by choosing the one weapon they could wield as opposed to playing on the other team's terms. It got so bad that opposing coaches and parents would get angry and say it wasn't fair, even though it was all within the rules. That is pretty much what David did, and that's pretty much what we need to do against the Goliaths in our lives. Refuse to fight them on their terms. Instead, fight them on our terms.

In 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 Paul wrote, "though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds." We are waging war in this world. Some of our battles will be against obstacles and circumstances in our lives, some will be against people who oppose us or seek to harm to us, and at all times we are fighting a spiritual opponent. We have no choice because we will be attacked. How will we fight? What weapons will we use in our battles? David knew if he tried to use the kinds of weapons that Goliath used he was going to lose. He wisely chose to use the weapon that he was adept at, one that Goliath neither expected nor had any defense against.

What weapons does the world use? A number of years ago a large corporation treated us in a way that I believed was not fair. Because they did not make some things clear in our contract with them they ended up charging us a considerable sum of money that we rightfully should not have had to pay. I called them and protested. But they were unrepentant. My pleas fell on deaf ears. Despite repeated attempts to rectify the situation I got nowhere. They were completely unmoved, and were not changing. How could I respond? Could I take them to small claims court? I considered it, but I realized that was going to be a dead-end. My reaction was to inform them that though I had been a customer of theirs for many years if they were going to treat me like this they could count on losing my business. Furthermore I considered telling them that I was going to make sure I would let everyone know how they were treating me. Oh and by the way, I would be sure to let them know that I was a pastor who had the ears of hundreds of people. So

here's the question, what weapons were in play there? That company was using sheer, raw power. They had more power than I did and they were going to use it. And my response was to use whatever power I had, meager as it might be, to try to put pressure on them. That is the way of the world. Use force, use power, use whatever tool you need to force the other person to bend to your will.

Whether the opponent we face is a person, a group, or some unwanted circumstance, the temptation for us is to use power, force, manipulation, deceit, or any other of the world's ways to try to win the battle and get our way. The lesson that we should learn from David is ***you will never defeat Goliath by using Goliath's weapons***. I will reiterate that statement because I believe it is so crucial. You will never defeat Goliath by using the same weapons he uses.

How are we to fight then? What are these weapons that Paul talked about that have divine power? David was the greatest king ancient Israel ever had. In some ways David foreshadows the greatest king Israel ever will have and that is the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ faced a Goliath. His opponent was the power structures of the world. It was the most powerful people of his own nation, Israel, and the most powerful human force on earth at that time, mighty Rome.

Did Jesus Christ have the raw power to defeat those enemies and to force them to submit to him? Given that he demonstrated power over nature itself he most certainly had the power to defeat those power structures if he so chose. When he stood before the chief priest the night he was arrested, was he at the chief priest's mercy or did he have the power to take over the situation? When he stood before Pontius Pilate did he have any power to change the situation? The answer of course is that he had way more power than he needed to defeat all of those enemies.

Instead, Jesus allowed them to nail him to a cross. Why did he do that? It was because he loved the entire world, including those who rejected him and were responsible for killing him. Because he loved them he chose to sacrifice himself in order to serve their greatest need. He brought about their greatest possible good, the chance to experience the salvation of their eternal souls and to have life.

Which weapons were the most powerful? Was it the weapons of power and force that the world wielded or was it the weapons of love, sacrifice and service? Given that Jesus won the greatest victory in all of human history and changed the world more than any other person, while those who opposed him completely failed and disappeared pretty much from the scene, I'd have to say that the weapons Jesus used were the most powerful.

There is one other weapon that we have. It is the weapon of faith, and I will talk about that and just a moment. Here's the lesson that we need to learn and we need to learn it thoroughly. As we face the Goliaths in our lives, no matter who or what they are, if we use Goliath's weapons, the weapons of this world, in the end we will inevitably lose. The only way to defeat Goliath is to use weapons that have divine power. And that means we fight by loving them, serving them, sacrificing ourselves for them, and trusting our God.

DAVID LIVED FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

In 1 Samuel 17: 26 when David witnessed Goliath's taunting and Israel's humiliating response he was indignant. He was upset over the disgrace to Israel because this man was defying the Army of the living God. What David cared about is identified in verses 46 and 47. What was most on his heart was that, "the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands." What he cared about was that people would know the majesty of his God and know that the battle was in God's hands.

David would later write in Psalm 34:1- 3, "I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips. I will glory in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together." David wanted to extol the Lord at all times. He wanted his life to be about glorifying the Lord. It was this goal that gave him the motivation and the strength to fight against Goliath. Everyone else in Israel wanted God to be honored. But that was not their highest goal. Their highest goal was taking care of themselves. Yes it was a bummer that Goliath was making them and their God look puny, but if they tried to do something about it, it might cost them their lives. That was not a risk they were willing to take because it would sacrifice their greatest goal, which was to take care of themselves.

There is a simple question that comes into play continually in our lives. What matters to you most? Our little granddaughter, Ella, gave an example of this in a way I find unsettling. At 6 months old she already demonstrates an obsession with smart phones. When she sees one it instantly captures all of her attention. I shudder to think of what this might mean for the future. Put her down on a rug with a phone a foot away and she reaches for it, trying to figure out a way to move close enough to grab it. Try to distract her even with her favorite toys and she ignores them. All that matters is that phone.

David cared about self-preservation as much as anyone. But he cared about the name and honor of his God most of all. The danger to himself could not distract him from that which he most cared about. If what matters to us is that we bring glory to God, that will profoundly impact everything we do. What if we have to go through difficult or deeply disappointing circumstances? That won't matter as long as we can bring glory to God in the midst of it. What if someone mistreats us and takes advantage of us? It won't matter as long as we can bring glory to God in the midst of it.

Having the focus of bringing glory to God as the unquestioned desire of our lives provides us with enormous strength, motivation, stability and, yes, even power. It directs how we will respond to people who may not be treating us the way we would desire. Our goal in our response will always be to bring glory to God. This great desire will give us enormous courage and strength and resilience.

DAVID TRUSTED GOD

In 1 Samuel 17:37 as David was trying to convince Saul to let him fight Goliath David said, "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." David's confidence wasn't based on his superior strategy, tactics or ability, it was based on faith in God. He believed that God was real and active in his world and that his safety was in God's hands. His secret weapon in the battle was faith in an ever present Almighty God.

You see the same idea in verse 47. There he said, "The battle is the Lord's." Was that only true in David's day? If that was only a story of something that happened 3000 years ago but that doesn't happen today then there really isn't very much we can glean from this story. This is a question every single one of us must face on an ongoing basis. Do the battles we face belong to the Lord? Does he work in our world and is the outcome of the battle more dependent upon him than upon anything we do? If our battles belong to the Lord then we can face them with the same confidence that David had. If they do not, then faith is useless and we are totally on our own.

So which is it? Hebrews 13:5 says God has promised, "never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." He claims he won't leave us to muddle through on our own and he will never abandon us. Well that's nice, but just being with us doesn't guarantee anything. Maybe that verse promises that God will be with us but that doesn't mean we're not going to get badly beaten. Maybe he can't do anything about it. You could believe that if you didn't read on in Hebrews 13. Verse 6 says, "so we say with confidence, the Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can

mortals do to me?” We can have confidence because God is with us. Ephesians 1:11 says that God “works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.” He works out everything! That includes every battle you will face. In other words, the battle still belongs to the Lord.

People are magnetically drawn to the underdog. A big part of the popularity of March Madness is the possibility of some tiny basketball David defeating Goliath. As sappy as it may seem I find something deep within me emotionally touched when Daniel wins the match at the end of *The Karate Kid*, when the Titans win the championship game in *Remember the Titans*, when Rudy finally gets into a game at Notre Dame in *Rudy*, when James Braddock defeats champion and 10 to 1 favorite Max Baer in *Cinderella Man*, when the American hockey team defeats the Soviets in *Miracle*, and when Seabiscuit wins the race. Why do we all love underdogs so much?

I believe it is because we feel like we are the underdog. We have gone through life facing so many circumstances and opponents who seem so much more powerful than we are. And we have suffered our defeats at their hands. As we look at the future we see more battles ahead against overwhelming odds. We are David, facing that frightening Goliath. We love to see the underdog win because it makes us feel like maybe there’s hope for us. Maybe I’m overmatched and given no hope of winning, but if other underdogs can do it maybe I can too.

The great news of the David and Goliath story is if you are a follower of Jesus Christ you really aren’t an underdog. The fix is in. The contest is going to end in your favor. God has guaranteed that you will win. The battle belongs to him and he determines its outcome. But we absolutely must remember the previous point. **We must be clear about what it means to win.** David defined winning as God being honored. When we are clear that our entire lives are about God being glorified then we can know that God will see to it that we win.

Gladys Staines is a missionary to India. She and her husband were ministering to lepers there. But a number of years ago they were attacked a Hindu extremists who killed her husband and son. When the perpetrators were arrested Gladys publicly announced that in Christ she forgave them and love them. Her announcement had an enormous impact. One official said that only this kind of love could heal that deep divisions in Indian society. She was awarded padma shri by government of India, highest civilian award that country gives. In many ways she lost the battle as she suffered a grievous loss. But because she was about God being glorified she won the war.

