

Tell It Not In Gath

(2 Samuel 1:17-20)

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"Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice..."

INTRODUCTION

There are moments in human history when tragedy is so painful, defeat so humiliating, and shame so overwhelming that silence becomes louder than speech.

Moments when the fall of a great man becomes the mockery of enemies... when the tears of the righteous become the celebration of the ungodly.

HOW MANY OF US KNEW WHEN GEN.SANI ABACHA DIED? HOW MANY OF US REJOICED?

A story is told of two Christian colleagues working in the same organization.

One committed a serious error in the church and was disfellowshipped.

Instead of helping to contain the situation, his fellow Christian began discussing the matter openly with unbelieving co-workers.

Within days, the entire office was buzzing.

Mockery began: *"So these are the people who preach holiness every morning?"*

In the long run, the issue was eventually resolved and the brother restored.

But the damage had already been done.

- The real problem was not the mistake.
- The real problem was *where the story was told.*

Thousands of years earlier, David understood this dangerous principle when he cried: ***"Tell it not in Gath."***

This was not merely a political statement.

It was a deep spiritual principle about mercy, loyalty, discretion, and the protection of God's people from the ridicule of the ungodly.

DAVID'S MERCY TOWARD SAUL

Before Saul's death, Saul had spent years pursuing David to kill him.

Examples:

- **1 Samuel 18:10-11** — Saul threw a spear at David
- **1 Samuel 19:9-10** — Another assassination attempt
- **1 Samuel 24:3-7** — David spared Saul in the cave
- **1 Samuel 26:8-11** — David again refused to kill him

David's conviction was profound: *"Who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?"* (**1 Samuel 26:9**)

🏳️ YOU KNOW I KEEP ASKING MYSELF: WHY OF ALL MEN WILL GOD SEE DAVID AS THE MAN AFTER HIS OWN HEART?

BUT THIS LESSON ACTUALLY PROVIDED ME WITH SOME OF THE ANSWERS THAT I SEEK.

🏳️ I'VE COME TO REALIZE THAT GOD'S BEST GUYS AREN'T THE ONES WITHOUT SIN

THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN DAVID AND GOLIATH SHOWS THAT DAVID KNEW GOD BEFORE HE WAS ANNOINTED AS THE NEXT KING.

HE LEARNED TO PROJECT GOD ABOVE ALL OTHER THINGS....

NO MATTER HOW HOSTILE YOUR FATHER IS, WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF IN A HEATED ARGUMENT, SOMEONE SAYS...."**YOUR FATHER**" EVEN IF THE PERSON IS AS BIG AS GOLIATH, YOU'LL BE WILLING TO SHOW THE PERSON WHO YOU ARE EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE NOTHING.

David chose to see God's appointment in Saul rather than Saul's hostility toward him.

Even at Saul's death:

- David mourned
- He fasted
- He punished the Amalekite who claimed to have killed Saul
(2 Samuel 1:14-16)

David looked beyond Saul's behaviour to Saul's divine position.

It is possible to be right in judgment yet wrong in spirit.

You may be right about what you feel leadership is doing wrong, but the way and manner you're going about it might be a dangerous path before God.

David refused to allow Saul's failure to destroy his reverence for God's order.

WHY GATH?

David lamented: "*The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places... Tell it not in Gath.*"

➤ Why Gath?

Gath was:

- A principal Philistine city
- Home of Israel's enemies
- A centre of idol worship
- The city of Goliath

Studies shows that David was a teenager when he killed Goliath, being referred to as a boy.

To David, Gath symbolized the ungodly world that rejoices at the disgrace of God's people.

WHAT GATH REPRESENTS

The World Rejoices at the Fall of Believers

"Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth..." (*Proverbs 24:17*)

When Christians fail, the world often celebrates — not merely because of the failure, but because it appears to discredit God.

The World Uses Believers' Failures to Blaspheme

When David sinned, the prophet declared: "*By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme.*" (*2 Samuel 12:14*)

One believer's mistake is often used to judge the entire faith.

THE REASON INFORMATION CONFIDENTIALITY should not only be an official principle but applied in spiritual matters too.

DID DAVID MEAN THE NEWS WOULD NEVER SPREAD? **No.**

His concern was not secrecy but dignity.

He did not want:

- 🚩 National tragedy turned into entertainment
- 🚩 Leadership failure turned into mockery
- 🚩 Spiritual weakness turned into public spectacle

This was about honor, restraint, and spiritual sensitivity.

APPLICATION FOR CHRISTIANS TODAY

David's words reveal a timeless principle: *Not every truth must be broadcast everywhere.*

Protect the Reputation of Fellow Believers

"Love covers a multitude of sins."
(1 Peter 4:8)

Love does not eliminate accountability.

But love refuses to turn a brother's failure into public gossip.

Handle Problems Within the Family of God

Jesus taught: *"Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone."*
(Matthew 18:15)

Private correction should precede public exposure.

Guard Your Tongue

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue." **(Proverbs 18:21)**

Many believers today unknowingly become news broadcasters for Gath.

Do Not Feed the World with Church Scandals

Paul rebuked believers who took disputes before unbelievers: *"Dare any of you... go to law before the unjust?"*
(1 Corinthians 6:1)

In essence, Paul was saying: ***"Do not take family matters to Gath."***

MERCY EVEN IN DEATH

David called Saul: *"The beauty of Israel."* **(2 Samuel 1:19)**

This is astonishing.

Saul hunted him like an animal.

Yet David remembered his dignity, not his cruelty.

This reveals a Christ-like spirit before Christ's earthly ministry.

MODERN "GATHS" TODAY

Today, Gath may be:

- ✚ Social media platforms
- ✚ Public shaming culture
- ✚ Christian bloggers seeking attention
- ✚ Broadcasting church conflicts online
- ✚ Turning spiritual wounds into public content

Many believers are publishing daily in Ashkelon without realizing it.

CONCLUSION

David's cry still echoes through generations: *"Tell it not in Gath."*

It is a call to:

- Mercy instead of revenge
- Honor instead of mockery
- Discretion instead of gossip
- Brotherhood instead of betrayal

The church must learn again:

- *How to correct without disgracing.*
- *How to restore without broadcasting.*
- *How to protect without covering sin.*

GLEN CAMPBELL.....1970.....TRY A LITTLE KINDNESS

- You've got to try a little kindness
- Yes show a little kindness
- Just shine your light for everyone to see
- And if you try a little kindness

Then you'll overlook the blindness of narrow-minded people on the narrow-minded street

- *Correct the brother.*
- *Restore the fallen.*
- *But do not carry the news to Gath.*