

# The Aardsma Weekly

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Writer: Rachel Aardsma



## Winter Is Here!

Yes, winter is definitely here, and it all began on December 1st, or more like November 30th.

Late on November 30th, when we were all tucked in bed, a howling ice storm began, which continued on until very early the next morning. When we got up, we found a delightful surprise: nature was welcoming winter with a beautiful flaky snow.

And ever since the 1st, things have been getting better and better (or worse and worse, depending on whether you are a pessimist or an optimist). The temperatures have dropped far below freezing, and Caleb and Timothy are delighted to find fresh icicles each morning.

The sidewalks were very icy for two or three days, which made going up and down Dad's metal stairs very precarious. (Especially those who like to use the method of a running head start, a flying leap, and a beautiful elegant slide to the door. Those with shorter legs add a sweet little bounce in the middle.)

Another sign that winter is here is that the house gets freezing at night! Everyone is piling on the extra blankets. Even though my room is the warmest in the house, I still pile on a fleece blanket, a big comforter, a quilt, and a sleeping bag.

A very unwelcome sign of winter is that the roof leaks. And I mean leaks *everywhere*. The reason it leaks is that water freezes on the roof at night, and then when the sun melts the water the next day, it drips through our ceiling and, consequently, leaks. Beka's roof leaks all the way down her wall, and also has a nice steady drip that makes her floor at least inch deep in water every morning! The laundry room roof leaks terribly as well. We managed to fill a jar, two pitchers, and a plastic cup in one night, just from the laundry room drip! There are other complaints from various people that their roofs leak as well, but they aren't half as bad as the laundry room. (I got lucky! I have the smallest, warmest, and most drip-free room in the house!)

Christmas seems just around the corner. I've already started hinting that its time to get our Christmas tree. Beka is full of ideas on how to make this year's tree the greatest

yet! With no little babies to smash the low-hanging ornaments, she's finally convinced Mom to buy some silver balls. (We had a few last year, but somehow they all got broken. Caleb and Timmy delighted in the little 'tinkle-tinkle' each time one slipped off the branches or was dropped by careless fingers.)

I'm collecting decorating supplies for a Christmas cookie-decorating afternoon. Timmy claims he doesn't like Christmas cookies, but I got his attention when I told him that we would use those tiny silver balls. (I think I hooked him when I described them as 'edible bullets'!)

Yes, it definitely seems winter is here. There can be no doubt about it when hot chocolate and marshmallows start appearing on snowy mornings, Timmy and Caleb leave muddy, wet, and cold hats, mitts, coats, and boots all over the house, and Christmas decorations are beginning to pile up in unsuspecting corners. So, we're getting out the carols and stocking up on blankets and marshmallows and reveling in this delightful time of year.

## **The Weekly Bible Verse**

Psalm 66:1: Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth; sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise.

# **David: A Man After God's Own Heart**

By Rachel Aardsma

### **Part 13.**

"You come at me with swords and spears!" David shouted at the giant. "But I come at you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel! This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and kill you, and I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army to the birds of the fields. Then all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that He does not save by sword or spear, for the battle is the Lord's, and He shall deliver you to me." At this, the giant Goliath took a step forward towards the battle line, drawing his sword, but got no further.

David wasn't sure exactly what he was doing, but he quickly set a flat, smooth stone into his sling, and took a running step forward. This seemed so familiar. Hadn't he done it all before? Millions and millions of times over? While he was a shepherd, he had practiced and practiced on trees and rocks until he could shoot a stone from his sling with perfect accuracy. And it was time to do it all again.

All the rest happened so fast, and yet time seemed to freeze. David quickly decided that his only chance was to get Goliath in the face, the only unprotected part of his armored body. David let the stone fly from his sling, and he knew his shot would hit its mark long before it struck Goliath.

Both armies gasped as if one man, and David knew he had to act fast. This was a big moment for Israel and its God.

David ran to where the giant had fallen, and realized that he had no sword. How was he to be victorious if he couldn't complete the job? But then he saw Goliath's sword, lying in the grass, shining and sparkling in the sun. David picked it up and was amazed at how heavy the sword was.

Goliath was dead. David, having finished his unpleasant task, suddenly felt rather weak. How had he done it? Finally, with it all over and he victorious, David paused for a minute and thought what an amazing thing he and God had just done.

Israel's army, suddenly brave, gave a deafening roar of victory and surged forward. Now it was the Philistines' turn to run in terror, and they performed beautifully. They scattered in all directions, screaming in terror. The soldiers dashed around David and the fallen giant, and soon he was left alone with his enemy. David turned from the scene of the battle and glanced one more time at the dead giant.

"Well, Lord," he said, smiling at last. "We did it."

**A Note To The Reader:** You may have noticed, in reading the part about David and Goliath's famous duel above, that I didn't use the 'instant hero' idea. I never liked that way of thinking. Was David really all caught up in the 'hero' thing after he killed Goliath? Did he really raise the sword in triumph and start blowing kisses and signing autographs for all his worshiping fans?

There's a song that goes: "David was a shepherd boy. He killed Goliath and shouted for joy." I was not sure David really did shout for joy when he killed Goliath, so I was stuck as to what he really did. The Bible says nothing about David's reaction, and that left me to come up with something on my own.

When I was getting ready to write this section of David's amazing life history, I knew I had to decide on something. So, one morning I started a discussion about it. Rebekah and I talked about it for a long time and came up with a few theories. Finally we asked Dad, and he said that he didn't think David would have 'shouted for joy' after he killed Goliath. He also told me that David was certainly a hero as soon as he killed Goliath, but that no one celebrated him until afterwards. They were all too busy finishing off the Philistines to worry about David. So, we came to that conclusion, and Beka and I started having some fun with what David did after he killed Goliath.

Our discussion ended when we laughingly decided he stared in horror at the dead Goliath, dropped the sword, ran home, buried his face in his mother's shoulder, and sobbed, "Ma, you'll never guess what I just did!"



## **A Word About The Weather**



I think the temperature is stuck! It hasn't gone over 40 degrees for the last two weeks! We had a light sprinkling of snow at the beginning of the week, and it still hasn't melted. Temperatures were below 7 degrees one night this week, and extra blankets are being piled on in every room!



This week has been jammed full of two things: school and work. We had four pigs to do up this week, and we managed to do them all

Two of Matthew's good friends, Mr. Watts and Mr. Blunt, came to help us do them up. Mr. Blunt shot them, and Mr. Watts helped Matthew clean, skin, and hang them.

We did one pig in an afternoon, and two days later did all the others in an afternoon and an evening. That was the kind of work that leaves you dead tired. By the time we'd finished I was stumbling blindly around because my eyes had stopped opening about five hours ago. I was also terribly off balance because I had thrown on mismatched shoes and they were both for the right foot. So, I had to wear one on the left foot and the other on the right. That throws you off balance very badly.

Our freezers are full of soup bones, roasts, pork chops, and above all: hamburger. We used our electronic meat grinder and ground up every scrap of fat and every bit of scrap meat into hamburger. By the time we'd lugged all that hamburger out to the pantry and shoved it into the freezer, you had to sit on the freezer top to get the thing closed.

We decorated for Christmas this week as well. We got it on Saturday. Beka and I have really been pushing for a great tree, and we've got it! Matthew got a beautiful Scotch pine from a local farmer, Mr. Ehman, the man who helped him get his deer earlier.

He lugged it home and we shoved it into our tree stand. (We always do the same thing every year. Tree won't stand straight because it was cut at an angle, and so we end up chopping off branches and twisting the tree around for half an hour before it's finally straight.) We set the beautiful tree in the corner of the living room, and Beka and I attacked it with every beautiful thing we could find. We wanted a classic tree, and we got it!

First, we strung a string of multi-colored lights on the tree. As usual, we didn't have enough, and Dad and Timmy did their annual Christmas tradition: they spent half an hour trying to get some lights to work. They gave it up after a while, like they always do.

After that, we put a garland of silvery bells on the tree, but that garland only covered a quarter of the tree. So, we got out a red string of fake cranberries, and attached that to the bells. (You can't tell that we did it now, but it caused some worries when the tree was bare!)

Then came millions of red bows of ribbon and felt. When the tree was blooming bows, we scattered multi-colored balls liberally over the tree. We added candy-canes as a finishing touch, and put a beautiful angel on top.

The tree looks gorgeous, and Beka and I keep telling each other what a great job we did.



## **A Word of Wisdom**



Cats eat hard food loudly. It is wise to put their food dishes away from where you sleep, or you may wake up a million times a night to hear your cat crunching away. (I know this well, but I'm not practicing what I preach! I guess I just like having the cat in my room!)