

David and Goliath

Giants in the Land

by

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all Scriptures quoted from the NASB

A history lesson

One of the first things we must do to understand the story of David and Goliath, is to understand *why* the battle happened. To do that, we must go back in history; way back. The Philistines and the Israelites had a long track record of animosity. To get an understanding of why, we should go back and look at where it originally started. The history we will look at starts with Abraham.

At God's leading, Abram left Ur, of the Chaldeans, to head for the Promised Land. Eventually, Abraham settled in the land of the Philistines, where Isaac was born. Abimelech, the ruler of the Philistines, made a treaty with Abraham, because he feared Abraham's wealth and power. The treaty stated that Abraham would not deal falsely with Abimelech (Gen 21:22). Please note that the treaty did not say that Abimelech could not deal falsely with Abraham, only that Abraham could not deal falsely with Abimelech. It was definitely a one sided deal. A little while after the treaty was made, the Philistines seized one of Abraham's wells that he had dug. Abraham then left the land of the Philistines and dwelt in Beersheba, a town in Canaan.

After Abraham had died, a famine hit the land (see Gen 26). Isaac took his family to live in a town named Gerar, in the land of the Philistines. It was there that God appeared to Isaac. God reminded Isaac of His oath with Abraham, in which his descendants would be given the land (including Philistia) and be blessed. God did indeed bless Isaac and the Philistines became envious of his wealth and possessions. Once again the Philistines contended over the ownership of wells that Abraham had previously dug. Isaac moved back to Beersheba to get away from the contentious Philistines.

Many years later another famine hit the land (Gen 42). God had already made plans for the children of Israel to go down to Egypt where there was food. Joseph brought his family to Egypt where they were well accepted, for a time. When the children of Israel went down to Egypt to escape the famine, it is quite possible that the Philistines rejoiced to see them go. The children of Israel got comfortable down in Egypt, and eventually forgot to leave. The Philistines would not see Israel again for another four hundred and seventy years. In that time, they would forget all about Israel. But God would not forget His promise.

You must take the Land

Joshua was chosen by God to lead the armies of Israel to capture the Promised Land. In the book of Joshua, chapters one through twelve tell about the thirty-one kings who were

defeated and the land that Israel took. In chapter thirteen we find that Joshua has now become an old man. God reminded Joshua that the land of the Philistines had not yet been conquered by Israel. Joshua disobeys God's command and Israel did not go out to conquer the Philistines, It is unfortunate that Israel disobeyed God and did not destroy the Philistines at that time. They could have prevented a tremendous amount of grief if they would have done what God had commanded.

This brings up an interesting point. Are there any Philistines in your life that you have not dealt with yet? Do you have any unconfessed sin, or someone or something you have not forgiven? Perhaps something in your past still haunts you. Now is the time to defeat this enemy. You must seize the Philistine in your life and completely destroy it. You must do spiritually, what Israel did not do physically; you must take the land. Our battle today is not against flesh and blood, but against the devil and spiritual wickedness. With God on our side, we cannot lose. Interestingly enough the Philistine's would not be subdued by Israel until three hundred and fifty years later when David was King. Until that time, the Philistine's would be a thorn in Israel's side. They were a thorn that Joshua should have destroyed.

The wrath of God

The book of first Samuel describes the events that lead up to the battle between David and Goliath. A battle takes place (in chapter four) between the Philistines and Israel in the fields between the cities of Ebenezer and Aphek. Israel lost the battle and most of their army. Thirty thousand men of Israel were killed in the battle, and the Ark of the Covenant was captured. The Philistines celebrated their victory by taking the ark to the city of Asdod, in Philistia, where they set it in the temple of Dagon, the Philistine god. The Philistines were sure that their god Dagon had given them victory over Israel and the Lord God. Putting the ark in the temple of Dagon was their way of gloating over their victory, and proclaiming their god, as supreme.

The Lord God punished the city of Ashdod. He devastated the land around the city by ravaging it with mice. A plague of mice would cause significant damage to crops, and they would also eat the grain and other food stored in buildings. Mice can also spread diseases to both animals and humans thereby increasing the problem. In addition to the mice, God also killed many of the inhabitants (the Bible does not say how), and smote many others with tumors. It took a number of weeks, but eventually the terrified people of Ashdod realized that the ark was the source of their calamity and sent it down to the city of Gath.

The leaders of Gath quickly set up the ark so that their people could gloat about the victory of Dagon over the God of Israel. Apparently, the inhabitants of Ashdod had neglected to inform the inhabitants of Gath about the plague of mice and the hand of God. The hand of the Lord God was now against the city of Gath with a very great destruction. He also killed some of the people and smote others with tumors. The residents of Gath also eventually came to the realization that the ark was causing their problems. Once this realization set in, they wasted no time in sending the ark to the next city down the road, Ekron. Once again, terror and destruction followed the ark. Many people in the city of Ekron died, and those left alive were smitten with

tumors. The ark was in the land of the Philistines for seven months, and so (I might add) was the wrath of God.

It took seven months for the Philistines to reach the conclusion that the God of Israel was unhappy and that they needed to appease him. In desperation, the Philistines called for the priests of Dagon to find out how to get rid of the ark. The priests of Dagon told the people to offer the Lord God a guilt offering of five golden mice and five golden tumors. The number of five represented the number of Philistine lords. The priests also told them to build a new cart and hitch it to two cows that had never worn a yoke. The Philistines did as their suggested. They put the ark and the guilt offerings on the cart and sent it on its way. The five lords of the Philistines followed the cart at a distance to see where it would go. The cows headed straight for the city of Beth-shemite, in the land of Israel, The Philistines breathed a sigh of relief, and left Israel alone for a short period of time.

The Philistines did not lose their hatred for Israel (the ark incident may have increased it) and drew near again for battle as described in chapter seven. Israel had not yet recovered from the tremendous loses of the previous battle and the strength of their army was still sadly depleted. The army was simply not ready for another fight. They were therefore, greatly afraid of the Philistines. In desperation, Israel sought out Samuel and requested that he cry to the Lord to save them from the Philistines. The Lord answered Samuel's prayer and miraculously defeated the Philistines. The Philistines then left Israel alone for many years.

A King for Israel

In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. Judges 21:25

In chapter eight of first Samuel, Israel gathered together and requested that Samuel, who is now an old man, appoint a king over them. Israel wanted to be like the rest of the world. All the nations around them had a king, except for Israel. Perhaps the Israelites thought that if they had a king, the Philistines would leave them alone. Perhaps the Israelites simply wanted to be more like the nations around them. The request displeased Samuel but he took the request before the Lord. The Lord informed Samuel that Israel had rejected God from being king and now they want a man to rule over them. God instructed Samuel to warn the people of what would happen to them if they insisted upon having a human king rather than having God as their king. Samuel proceeded to warn them and told them what would happen when a king reigned over them. The people would not listen to his words from God and insisted upon having a human king.

In chapters nine and ten, God chooses Saul to be king and Samuel anoints him. Saul battles with the Philistines in chapters eleven through fourteen. For the first time ever, Israel became a thorn in the Philistine's side. Saul loved being king, but he had a problem with disobedience. He continually disobeyed God's instructions. It is in chapter fifteen where Saul (once again) disobeyed God during the battle against the people of Amalek and God rejected

Saul as king. In chapter sixteen, the Lord sent Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint David as king. This is where our story begins.

A king for God

1 Samuel Chapter 16

(1) Now the Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected a king for myself among his sons.”

(2) But Samuel said, “How can I go? When Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” And the Lord said, “Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.'”

(3) “And you shall invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for Me the one whom I designate to you.”

(4) So Samuel did what the Lord said, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the city came trembling to meet him and said, “Do you come in peace?”

(5) And he said, “In peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” He also consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice.

Samuel was afraid that if Saul found out that he had anointed another person as king, that Saul would kill him. Apparently, Samuel's fears were well founded due to the fact that God provided a cover story to protect him. Samuel filled his horn with anointing oil and set out for Bethlehem. The elders of Bethlehem were fearful when they saw Samuel approaching the city. Was he bringing good news or bad news? Was he going to prophesy in their favor, or against them? Imagine their relief when he told them that he simply came to sacrifice to the Lord. Then he honored them by inviting them to attend the sacrifice. Their fear was removed, although they may have wondered why Jesse and his sons were also invited to the sacrifice. After the sacrifice, they entered a room to have a feast. Samuel sat back and watched as Jesse introduced his sons one-by-one.

(6) Then it came about when they entered, that he looked at Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him.”

(7) But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance but the Lord looks at the heart.”

(8) Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.”

(9) Next Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.”

(10) Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen these.”

I find it interesting that only the first three sons that pass before Samuel are named. Only Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah are named. We will later find out that these three sons will take part in the upcoming battle against Goliath and the Philistines. We are also introduced to a facet of God's personality. We are shown that God looks intently at what is inside a man's heart. Eliab was tall and handsome (just like King Saul), but his heart was unacceptable to the Lord. God does not care about outward physical appearance. It is not the handsome and beautiful who enter heaven, but the pure in heart. God did not choose any of David's brothers because their hearts were not right before the Lord. Samuel knew that God has not chosen any of the sons that Jesse has introduced, but he was puzzled. There must be another son.

(11) And Samuel said to Jesse, “Are these all the children?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, and behold, he is tending the sheep.” Then Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.”

The shepherd boy

Someone had to run and go get David. It was probably one of Jesse's younger sons who would have known exactly where to find David; though the Bible does not specify. Everyone had to wait until David arrived before the feast could begin. I find it interesting that Jesse assigned the job of tending and guarding the flock to his youngest son. All of Jesse's sons had been invited to the sacrifice, including David. David was considered so small and insignificant that Jesse left him behind. I think that God enjoys using the people that nobody expects will amount to anything. God displays His strength through our weakness. God will use us if our heart is right before him. David had a heart that God could use. Samuel was patiently waiting when David came in out of the fields.

(12) So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. And the Lord said, “Arise anoint him; for this is he.”

(13) Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

David is described as being ruddy, which simply means that he either had red hair or that he had light, fair colored skin. Either one (or both) would be unusual for a Hebrew. He was quite handsome and his eyes must have made the girls sigh. Samuel was at first impressed with Eliab's appearance. I imagine that he quickly forgot all about Eliab as soon as David entered the room. As soon as he saw him, Samuel knew that David was the next king.

In the presence of the elders of the city, along with Jesse and his sons, Samuel took his horn of oil and anointed David. The “horn” that Samuel carried contained one gallon (four liters) of anointing oil. David would have been thoroughly covered, and soaked, by the anointing oil. In

the Old Testament, anointing oil was a type and shadow of (represented) the Holy Spirit. The Bible says that “the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward.” In these New Testament days, when a person accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, that person gets anointed with the “oil” of the Holy Spirit. Today, the Holy Spirit is the anointing oil.

After being anointed, David went back out to the fields to tend his father's sheep. The Bible does not mention what the reactions were of the people who were in attendance when David was anointed king. I'm sure that they must have been surprised and even envious, especially Eliab. David did not lord it over anyone that he had just been anointed as king. Instead, he humbly went back to tending the sheep. David was not ready to lead the nation yet, and God knew it. The pasture was used to train David to lead God's sheep. It was in the fields that David would learn to trust God.

The young musician

(14) Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord terrorized him.

(15) Saul's servants then said to him, “Behold now, an evil spirit from God is terrorizing you.

(16) “Let our lord now command your servants who are before you. Let them seek a man who is a skillful player on the harp; and it shall come about when the evil spirit from God is on you, that he shall play the harp with his hand, and you will be well.”

(17) So Saul said to his servants, “Provide for me now a man who can play well, and bring him to me.”

(18) Then one of the young men answered and said, “Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is a skillful musician, a mighty man of valor, a warrior, one prudent in speech, and a handsome man; and the Lord is with him.”

(19) So Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, “Send me your son David who is with the flock.”

Verse fourteen of chapter sixteen, says that the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul. In the Old Testament, it was normal for the Spirit of the Lord to only be upon one person at a time. If you look back in chapter ten, you can read where Samuel anointed Saul as king and the Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul. Now however, Samuel has anointed David and the Spirit of the Lord has descended upon him and has left Saul. Verse fourteen (chapter sixteen) also states that an evil spirit from God came to terrorize Saul. Saul's servants eventually figured out that music would refresh Saul and cause the evil spirit to depart. Saul then instructed his servants to find a musically gifted person.

One of the young men in Saul's service remembered seeing David. By the description that he gave, apparently he had been very impressed with David. He had to have spent some time around David because he knew that David was a skillful musician. He also knew that David was a mighty man of valor, who was brave and courageous. He must have known about David's

battle with the lion and the bear because he considered David to be a warrior. That certainly got Saul's attention. Saul wasted no time sending for David.

(20) And Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread and a jug of wine and a young goat, and sent them to Saul by David his son.

(21) Then David came to Saul and attended him, and Saul loved him greatly; and he became his armor bearer.

(22) And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Let David now stand before me; for he has found favor in my sight."

(23) So it came about whenever the evil spirit from God came to Saul, David would take the harp and play it with his hand; and Saul would be refreshed and be well, and the evil spirit would depart from him.

Saul liked David right from the start. David soon became Saul's armor bearer. David's main job however, was still to play the harp for Saul. Their relationship developed to the point where Saul loved David greatly. Verse twenty-three says that whenever the evil spirit came upon Saul, David would play the harp and the evil spirit would depart. This time period was probably invaluable training for David. He got to see the king's household up close and personal, and he had to depend upon God to use his music to drive out the evil spirit. The Bible does not say how long David stayed with Saul in the King's household. We do know that after some period in time, David went back home to continue tending the family's herd of sheep. In chapter seventeen, we find that David would go back and forth from Saul to Bethlehem to tend his own father's flock of sheep.

A giant enemy

1 Samuel 17

(1) Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle; and they were gathered at Socoh which belongs to Judah, and they camped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim.

(2) And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered, and camped in the valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array to encounter the Philistines.

(3) And the Philistines stood on the mountain on one side while Israel stood on the mountain on other side, with the valley between them.

(4) Then a champion came out from the armies of the Philistines named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

(5) And he had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was clothed with scale-armor which weighed five thousand shekels of bronze.

(6) He also had bronze greaves on his legs and a bronze javelin slung between his shoulders.

(7) And the shaft of his spear was like a weavers beam, and the head of his spear weighed six hundred shekels of iron, his shield carrier also walked before him.

(8) And he stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, and said to them, "Why do you come out to

draw up in battle array? Am I not the Philistine and you servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves and let him come down to me.

(9) “If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will become your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall become our servants and serve us.”

(10) Again the Philistine said, “I defy the ranks of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together.”

(11) When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

It has been some time since Israel and the Philistines have butted heads. The Philistines had found a secret weapon, a giant named Goliath, and they were training him for battle. When Goliath was ready, the Philistines came out to play. The first piece of information that the Bible gives us about Goliath is that he was from the city of Gath. Do you remember Gath? Gath was one of the cities that the Ark of the Covenant was taken to in the land of the Philistines. God's hand was heavy against Gath with death, destruction, and tumors. Goliath came from Gath. I don't know if Goliath had been born yet, while the ark was in Gath, but I do know that he was a very angry man, or should I say, giant. He seems to be harboring a giant sized (no pun intended) grudge against Israel and their God. Perhaps it had something to do with that ark incident.

Goliath was six cubits and a span tall. A cubit is 21 inches, or 533 millimeters. Six cubits would be 10.5 feet or 3.2 meters. Add to that a span, which is about 9 inches, or 228 millimeters. Goliath was close to 12 feet (3.6 meters) tall. He was more than twice as tall as the average Hebrew. If you are curious about how much Goliath's armor weighed, here is the formula to use. A shekel weighs .364 ounce (troy). There are twelve troy ounces in a pound. Take the amount of shekels, multiply it by .364, and then divide the result by twelve. The armor Goliath wore weighed five thousand shekels or 151 pounds (68.5 kilograms). The head of his spear was 18 pounds (8 kilograms) of iron. Not only was Goliath big, he was also very strong. It is no wonder that the army of Israel was afraid of him.

Goliath challenged the army in a way in which they were unfamiliar. Goliath wanted a one on one battle. The winner takes all. Israel was afraid because they knew they would honor the outcome of the battle, and probably become slaves. The Philistines had no intention of honoring the agreement if Goliath lost, but Israel did not know that. All that Israel knew was that they had no one who could defeat Goliath. Day after day, Goliath defied the army of Israel, and in doing so, defied the Lord God. I find it interesting that Saul and Israel, did not cry out to the Lord their God for deliverance. They seem to have completely forgotten about God.

It is easy to condemn Saul for not calling on God, but how many times have you and I done exactly the same thing? We often find ourselves in a bad situation and never think to cry out to God for deliverance. Only when the situation gets totally out of hand do we think to pray. My friends, this is the opposite of how we should be operating. Perhaps if we spent more time on our knees, we would not fall down as much. Israel had forgotten about God. Fortunately, God did not forget about Israel. He already had a plan.

The stand of a giant

(13) And the three older sons of Jesse had gone after Saul to the battle. And the names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the first born, and the second to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah.

(14) And David was the youngest. Now the three oldest followed Saul.

(15) But David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's flock at Bethlehem.

(16) And the Philistine came forward morning and evening for forty days, and took his stand.

Three of David's oldest brothers were already at the army camp. We were introduced to Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah at the feast where David was anointed as king. God did not choose any of them because their hearts were not right before Him. They had gone to fight the Philistines and be a part of Saul's army. They were where the action was, while David was with the sheep. Verse sixteen is a very revealing verse. Here we find that for forty days and nights, Goliath defied the army of Israel, and the Lord God. For forty days the giant took a stand against Israel and against God.

I have no idea what the number forty symbolizes in scripture, but it is a very coincidental number. Let me demonstrate. God destroyed life on the earth, with the exception of the inhabitants in the ark, by causing rain to fall for forty days and nights. Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah. Egyptian embalming took forty days to complete (as in the case of Joseph). Israel ate manna for forty years while they wandered in the wilderness. Moses was on the mountain forty days and nights when he received the commandments of God. Moses sent spies into the land of Canaan for forty days. Caleb, one the two spies who brought back a good report, was forty years old at the time. God gave the land of Israel rest for forty years during the time Gideon was a judge. David was king of Israel for forty years. Solomon was also king of Israel for forty years. Nineveh was given forty days to repent. Jesus fasted forty days and nights before confronting Satan. Jesus stayed on the earth for forty days after His resurrection.

When farmers have their fields and orchards “crop dusted” for flies, it must be done forty days in a row to kill all generations of flies and their eggs that hatch. One of the titles that the Bible gives to Satan is Beelzebub, which means, “lord of the flies.” Perhaps it is no coincidence that Jesus fasted forty days and nights before being tempted by the “lord of the flies.” I see that I have gotten off on a side tangent, back to our story.

The young messenger

(17) Then Jesse said to David his son, “Take now for your brothers an ephah of this roasted grain and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to your brothers.

(18) “Bring also these ten cuts of cheese to the commander of their thousand, and look into the welfare of your brothers, and bring back news of them.

(19) “For Saul and they and all the men of Israel are in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.”

(20) So David arose early in the morning and left the flock with a keeper and took the supplies and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the circle of the camp while the army was going out in battle array shouting the war cry.

(21) And Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle array, army against army.

(22) Then David left his baggage in the care of the baggage keeper, and ran to the battle line and entered in order to greet his brothers.

(23) As he was talking with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine from Gath named Goliath, was coming up from the army of the Philistines, and he spoke these same words; and David heard them.

Jesse wanted to find out how his sons were doing, so he sent David to the front lines with food and instructions to bring back news of his brothers. David arrived at the camp while the army was going out in battle array shouting the battle cry and trying to look ferocious. The Philistines responded in like manner and the two armies ran up to the brook that separated them. They shook their shields and rattled their swords and shouted, but neither army made any move to cross the brook. With battle immanent and no weapons of his own, David headed straight for the battle line.

I don't know about you, but I would not go running up to the battle line without being dressed out in armor and without any weapons. I think I would wait to see what happens, then go find the brothers. Not David. David made his way right into the ranks and found his brothers and began to talk with them. Talk about courage. David is conversing with his brothers as if nothing is happening around him. Enter Goliath, stage right. Goliath then made his entrance and once again defied Israel. The Bible says that David heard his words.

An extravagant reward

(24) When all the men of Israel saw the man, they fled from him and were greatly afraid.

(25) And the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who is coming up? Surely he is coming up to defy Israel. And it will be that the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel."

(26) Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should taunt the armies of the living God?"

(27) And the people answered him in accord with this word, saying, "Thus it will be done for the man who kills him."

(28) Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger burned against David and he said, "Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart; for you have come down in order to see the battle."

(29) But David said, "What have I done now? Was it not a question?"

(30) Then he turned away from him to another and said the same thing; and the people answered

the same thing as before.

(31) When the words which David spoke were heard, they told them to Saul, and he sent for him.

The army of Israel, along with David's brothers, fled back to the camp. I imagine that the army of the Philistines laughed and taunted at them as they ran away. David followed them back to camp. The soldiers began to speak to David about the riches Saul would bestow upon the man who killed Goliath. That got David's attention. So he asked them "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?" The soldiers were impressed by David's words, because he talked like a prophet, and not as a common man. They told him that whoever killed Goliath would be made rich, given the king's daughter to marry, and his family would never have to pay taxes or do any public service again. What a reward! This certainly sounded good to David, besides, he had spent time in the king's household and had already met Saul's daughter. Eliab, David's older brother, was furious about what David had said. Eliab still considered David to be an insignificant nobody, capable of nothing but tending sheep. Let the real men do the fighting! Eliab was probably still mad because David had been anointed as king while he had been rejected. But David shrugged off Eliab and continued to ask his questions. He wanted to make sure he had heard right. David's words impressed many of the soldiers and someone went and told Saul. When word got to Saul he sent for David. David made his way to Saul's tent.

Giants in the land

(32) And David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

(33) Then Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth."

Saul was afraid because there was a giant in the land, and there was no one who could fight him and win. I imagine that Saul thought that only another giant could beat Goliath. Saul's problem: Israel had no giants. If Saul sent someone out to fight Goliath, and he lost, Israel would become the slaves of the Philistines. In walks David. David immediately tries to remove Saul's fear of Goliath. As far as he is concerned, nobody should be afraid anymore because he, David, would fight the giant. Saul was dumbfounded. All that Saul could see was that Goliath was a giant and a mighty warrior, while David had no military training. He saw the physical size of Goliath and the physical size of David. He was convinced that David was too small and too young. Goliath was an adult who had been training to be a warrior since he was a child, and David was still considered to be a youth. What Saul did not know was that there were actually two giants in the land. The second one was the young man standing in front of him. As far as Saul was concerned, David had no training as a warrior. He was wrong.

(34) But David said to Saul, “Your servant was tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock,

(35) I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued it from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him.

(36) “Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God.”

(37) And David said, “The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” And Saul said to David, “Go, and may Lord be with you.”

David wanted Saul to know that he was indeed a warrior and that he had previously been in battle. To kill a lion and a bear by hand is no small endeavor. Saul was impressed. David considered Goliath to be nothing more than an animal because he had defied the Lord God and Israel. David wanted Saul to know that it was the Lord who gave him victory over the lion and the bear. David was convinced that the Lord would give him victory over Goliath. David knew that Goliath wasn't just defying the armies of Saul, but his defiance was against the Lord God. But most important of all, David knew that the battle was the Lord's to fight. David knew that he would win. His confidence was contagious and Saul agreed to let David fight Goliath.

Instructions on armor

(38) Then Saul clothed David with his garments and put a bronze helmet on his head, and he clothed him with armor.

(39) And David girded his sword over his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. So David said to Saul, “I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them.” And David took them off.

Saul generously donated his armor to David. David proceeded to put on all of Saul's armor. When he tried to move, he could not hardly walk under all that weight. The armor was not made to fit David's body, it had been made to fit Saul. David had never been trained how to wear armor or even how to fight in it. David politely informed Saul that the armor would not work for him. David removed the armor from his body. Armor really is an interesting thing. With the exception of the sword, armor is made for defense. David did not want to be on the defense, he wanted to be on the offense. The New Testament talks about armor in the book of Ephesians 6:11 - 17.

(EPH 6:11) Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

(12) For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

(13) Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

(14) Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

(15) And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

(16) In addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one.

(17) And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

To defeat a giant

The first thing that Saul offered to David was his helmet. We find in Ephesians 6:17 that the helmet represents salvation. Saul's helmet did not fit David so he couldn't wear it. Here is the key; you cannot get into heaven on someone else's salvation. Only your own salvation will gain you entrance into heaven. The same goes for everyone. Your salvation will not get your wife, or husband, or kids, or even friends, into heaven. Everyone must make up their own mind, and heart, to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, and surrender their life over to God. David had already surrendered his life to God.

None of Saul's armor fit David, and he had to take it all off. No one else's armor is going to fit you either. You have to put on your own armor. God has a set of armor that is made just for you. It fits you perfectly. But *you* have to put it on. No matter how shiny and attractive the world's armor might look, don't wear it. The lucky rabbit's foot doesn't work (just ask the rabbit). A power crystal cannot ward off evil. Horoscopes are a lie. Psychic's are a fraud. Stay away from the armor that the world has to offer. God supplies you with His armor that has been custom fit just for you. Ephesians 6:11 is a command, not just a good idea. It says, *put on* the full armor of God. Your enemy can spiritually defeat you unless you put on the full armor of God. David could not wear Saul's armor because he was already wearing the armor of God.

(40) And he took his stick in his hand and chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in his pouch, and his sling was in his hand; and he approached the Philistine.

Have you ever wondered why David picked up five stones? The Bible does not tell us why David picked up five stones, but I do have a theory. 2Sam21:22 says that Goliath had four sons and that they were killed by David and his servants (his mighty men). My theory is that one stone was for Goliath (obviously) and the other four stones were symbolic or possibly represented the four sons who would be killed in the future. Hindsight tells us that one stone would be sufficient to kill Goliath.

I also questioned why David chose smooth stones. A rough stone would have done the job wouldn't it? It took quite a few decades of water running over those stones to make them smooth. The amount of friction caused by running water that it takes to smooth a stone is

inconceivable to me. And yet as I look at my own life, I've noticed that as I stand in the river of life that God uses people and events to rub off my rough edges. He is in the process of turning me into a smooth stone. He's doing the same thing to you.

Irritating and inconsiderate people rub us the wrong way almost every day. We find ourselves in events and situations that make us uncomfortable and force changes in our lives that we don't always want. God uses all of this friction and more, to rub off our rough edges and make us smooth. In the process, we become stones that God can use. You never know what giant God might slay by using you as the stone in His sling.

Why did God choose to use a stone? Why did God choose to use something as common as a stone? Did you know that the sling was actually a very effective weapon? Hundreds of years later, even the famous Roman armies would make effective use of the sling. Most soldiers however, did not go into battle armed with slings and stones. Slinging stones was an art that took years of practice to become proficient in. A slung stone rarely killed an enemy, but they did seriously wound them, and a wounded enemy is an enemy that cannot fight. Bows and arrows, swords and shields, spears and javelins were the preferred weapons for the majority of soldiers of that day and age. Goliath was prepared to do battle using such weapons, but David was prepared to fight using the name of the Lord (1Sam17:45) Romans 9:33 says “just as it is written, 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed.'” Perhaps the stone that David used to bring down the enemy represented Jesus Christ, the very Stone that God would sling on the cross to bring down His enemy. It's an interesting thought.

David reached into the brook, put the stones into his bag, and cautiously approached the giant. David is confident and ready. His trust is in the Lord. Goliath was probably wondering what the young man without armor was doing at the brook picking up stones. He may have even chuckled to himself, thinking that sticks and stones could not break his bones. The young boy and the giant stood there looking at each other from a safe distance, appraising the situation.

The unworthy opponent

(41) Then the Philistine came on and approached David, with the shield-bearer in front of him.

(42) When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, with a handsome appearance.

We find here that Goliath is a coward. An unarmed youth approaches him, yet Goliath is careful to put the man carrying his shield in front of him. Goliath keeps the shield (which was rather large) between himself and David. Goliath peers around the shield and realizes that David is only a youth. Goliath disdains, or rather, despises David. Goliath considers David to be an unworthy opponent. How dare they send out a youth! How dare they send out someone who is obviously not even a warrior! Goliath exploded in rage at Israel's insult. He was Goliath, the Philistines greatest warrior. He had been waiting 40 days for Israel to send out their greatest warrior to fight him. Who do send out? An insignificant teenager with a shepherd's staff in one

hand and a sling in the other! The insult was more than Goliath could handle and so began a verbal battle of insults.

(43) And the Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

(44) The Philistine also said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field.”

(45) Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword and a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted.

(46) “This day the Lord will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,

(47) and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the Lord's and He will give you into our hands.”

Goliath wasted no time and immediately began to taunt David. He asked if David was going play with him as a boy would play with his pet dog; by throwing sticks for the dog to chase. Goliath simply could not believe that someone would come out to fight without a sword, or spear, or javelin. What was this little boy thinking, that sticks and stones could actually break a giant's bones? He then cursed David and promised to kill him.

David, who did indeed consider Goliath to be a dog, had no intention of playing games. He let Goliath know that conventional weapons were not needed to defeat a giant. The name of the Lord God would defeat Goliath. David knew that Goliath's weapons were no match for the power of the name of the Lord. David took Goliath's threat and amplified it right back; not only will he kill Goliath, but also the army of the Philistines. Before the battle even started, David gave God the credit for the victorious outcome.

When our problems rise up in front of us like Goliath loomed above David, how do we respond? Who will fight the battle? What weapons will we use to defeat the enemy? Some of our problems tower over us like mountains and threaten to crush us flat. We feel helpless and alone. After all, what man has ever defeated the giant of divorce, debt, cancer, or heart disease? Do we trust God enough to let Him fight the battle? David knew that the battle was the Lord's and the enemy would be defeated. You and I know this also, but we don't always choose to let the Lord fight the battle. We want to be in control. But this is not how we should live. God is in control. We must let Him be completely in control. We must not succumb to the temptation to be in control, for if we do, we will be defeated. We must learn to trust God. David put his full confidence in the Lord, but there still had to be a battle.

Battle of the giants

(48) Then it happened when the Philistine rose and came and drew near to meet David, that David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine.

(49) And David put his hand into his bag and took from it a stone and slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the ground.

(50) Thus David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and he struck the Philistine and killed him; but there was no sword in David's hand.

(51) Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.

David immediately begins the attack. He did not give Goliath time to even draw his sword. As he runs, David puts a stone in his sling and lets it fly with deadly accuracy. There is no doubt in my mind that God guided that stone to hit its mark. Goliath's helmet did not do him one bit of good that day. No armor in the world can stand up against the name of the Lord of hosts. David drew Goliath's own sword out of its sheath and cut off the Giant's head. David made sure everyone watching knew that the Giant was dead. The Philistine army fled in terror.

David wasted no time when he began the battle. Did you notice that it was David who started the battle? Goliath was doing a lot of intimidating shouting and yelling and threatening, but his weapons were not in his hands. You could almost say that Goliath was like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. David had already killed one lion, and Goliath would be the next. David charged into the battle with his only weapon, the sling, and quickly won the battle.

We also have an enemy that roams around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour, as it is written in first Peter 5:8; *your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour*. Like David, we also have only one weapon we can use. Our weapon is a sword. And that sword is the word of God. It is the weapon that God has given us to use in spiritual battles. It is the only weapon we need. But we must learn to use it. We must spend time reading the Bible and applying it to our lives. David had undoubtedly spent countless hours using and practicing with his sling. When the time came to fight Goliath, David was ready.

How much time do we spend in the word of God? Do we know how to attack the enemy with our sword? Goliath was defeated because he did not use his sword. He had his weapons with him, but he never used them because he never expected David to attack. You and I should not go into battle unprepared, as Goliath did. God has shown and told us how to win the spiritual battles. Our armor must be on, and our sword drawn. Our enemy will attack. We must be ready, because there are still giants in the land.

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