

# Conquering King and Champion

Jesus is the greater David, the conquering King and Champion who defeated our greatest foe for all time.



GOD'S STORY  
THE TRANSFORMATION FOR ADULT LIFEGROUPS

1 Samuel 17:1-52

June 14, 2020

(1 Samuel 17:1-52) <sup>1</sup> Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Sokoh in Judah. They pitched camp at Ephes Dammim, between Sokoh and Azekah. <sup>2</sup> Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. <sup>3</sup> The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them. <sup>4</sup> A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span. <sup>5</sup> He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels; <sup>6</sup> on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. <sup>7</sup> His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. His shield bearer went ahead of him. <sup>8</sup> Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. <sup>9</sup> If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us." <sup>10</sup> Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other." <sup>11</sup> On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified. <sup>12</sup> Now David was the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse, who was from Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight sons, and in Saul's time he was very old. <sup>13</sup> Jesse's three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war: The firstborn was Eliab; the second, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah. <sup>14</sup> David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul, <sup>15</sup> but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's sheep at Bethlehem. <sup>16</sup> For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand. <sup>17</sup> Now Jesse said to his son David, "Take this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers and hurry to their camp. <sup>18</sup> Take along these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance from them. <sup>19</sup> They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines." <sup>20</sup> Early in the morning David left the flock in the care of a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions, shouting the war cry. <sup>21</sup> Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. <sup>22</sup> David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and asked his brother how they were... <sup>23</sup> When Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, "Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle." <sup>24</sup> "Now what have I done?" said David. "Can't I even speak?" <sup>25</sup> He then turned away to someone else and brought up the same matter, and the men answered him as before. <sup>26</sup> What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him. <sup>27</sup> David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." <sup>28</sup> Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth." <sup>29</sup> But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, <sup>30</sup> I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. <sup>31</sup> Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. <sup>32</sup> The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you." <sup>33</sup> Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. <sup>34</sup> David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them. "I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off. <sup>35</sup> Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine. <sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. <sup>37</sup> He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health and handsome, and he despised him. <sup>38</sup> He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. <sup>39</sup> "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!" <sup>40</sup> David said to the Philistine, "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. <sup>41</sup> This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. <sup>42</sup> 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." <sup>43</sup> As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. <sup>44</sup> Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground. <sup>45</sup> So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him. <sup>46</sup> David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the sheath. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran. <sup>47</sup> Then the men of Israel and Judah surged forward with a shout and pursued the Philistines to the entrance of Gath and to the gates of Ekron. Their dead were strewn along the Shaaraim road to Gath and Ekron.

## COMMUNITY – CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER

- What is the best underdog victory story you have ever witnessed or heard of?
- When the game is on the line, would you be more likely to trust the underdog or the seasoned veteran? Why?

The story of David defeating Goliath is one of the most known and loved in the Bible. We like a good underdog story, but the truth is, few of us ever really believe in the underdog until after the fact. In the same way, David's family and friends didn't think much of him until after he defeated Goliath. This was God's intention. David's story is meant to point us to Jesus, God's Son, who no one would have expected to save the world. When all seemed hopeless, Jesus showed himself to be the greater David, the conquering King and Champion who defeated our greatest foe for all time.

## CONTENT – EXPLORING GOD'S STORY

Have a volunteer read 1 Samuel 17:1-11

- How would you characterize the situation Israel found themselves in?
- Ephesians 2:12 says, "Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world." What relationship is there between this verse and the situation described in 1 Sam. 17:1-11?

Israel was terrified and frozen, unable to solve the gigantic problem before them. The bigger picture of the gospel is that sin is the greatest problem we face, and we are helpless to do anything about it. Ephesians 2:12 states that, before Jesus came to our rescue, we were without hope in the world. Romans 5:16 puts it this way, "For while we were still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly."

- Goliath asked, "Why do you line up in battle formation?" What are some useless ways people try to face the power of sin in their lives today?

Have a volunteer read 1 Samuel 17:12-21

- Among the four brothers, what was David's role during this crisis?
- Read Isaiah 53:2. What comparison could be made between this prophecy about Jesus and David in 1 Samuel 17:12-21?

David was from Bethlehem, and Jesus was from Bethlehem. Physically, there was nothing about David that made people think he was special, and there was nothing about Jesus' appearance either that would draw people to Him as a leader. When looking at the hopeless situation Israel was in, people were searching for a hero, so no one would think to give young David a second glance. When looking at the hopeless situation Israel was in while waiting for a Savior, no one thought someone like Jesus could possibly be God's Answer.

Have a volunteer read 1 Samuel 17:22, 28-40

- Considering that no one else accepted Goliath's challenge, why do you think Eliab got mad at David?
- What changed Saul's mind between verses 33 and 37?
- What do you learn about David's outlook in these verses?

- Read John 1:10-11. What similarities do you find in this passage and what David experienced in 1 Samuel 17:22-40?

David was an Israelite. He was on their side, and he was in Eliab's family. He had come down to the battle lines with good purpose, yet his own people assumed the worst about him. Similarly, Jesus came from Heaven to earth and His own people turned their noses up at Him, too. In Mark 6:3, they asked, 'Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And aren't his sisters here with us? 'So they were offended by him.'

Have a volunteer read 1 Samuel 17:41-52

- How would you describe David's battle plan—sit back and wait or take the initiative?
- What do you think David's brothers and the rest of Israel thought about David running toward Saul with a sling and a stone?
- Read 1 Corinthians 1:18. Why is the cross "foolishness" to those who are perishing?

David ran toward the fight (1 Samuel 17:22,32,48) and Jesus ran toward the cross. David slung a stone to defeat the giant Goliath and Jesus' death on the cross slung the stone that defeated sin and death, the greatest giants of all time (Heb. 2:14). Through David's life, God continued to show that all along He was redeeming a people by His grace for His glory. Jesus is the greater David, the Conquering King and Champion of our enemy.

### COMMISSION – ENGAGING IN GOD'S STORY

- Which truth did you need to hear the most today – that God is at work in your hopelessness? That Jesus runs to your battle? That Jesus has defeated the power of sin and death in your life? Something else? Explain.
- What battle do you need to run toward in faith and the power of Jesus, who, ultimately, has already won the victory?
- How might you share the gospel with someone using the story of David and Goliath?

**PRAYER:** Praise Jesus, your Conquering King and Champion. Thank Him for defeating sin and death on your behalf. Ask Him to help you never minimize belief in Him or diminish His power by your actions, but to fully embrace Him in both faith and obedience.

### CONTINUE TO JOURNEY THROUGH GOD'S STORY

Bible Reading Plan:

DAY 1 – 2 Samuel 1, 2:1-7  
 DAY 2 – 2 Samuel 3:1, 5; Psalm 23  
 DAY 3 – 2 Samuel 6-7  
 DAY 4 – Psalm 18; 2 Samuel 9  
 DAY 5 – 2 Samuel 11-12

KEY VERSE: Psalm 23:1-3

H.E.A.R. Method:

Highlight a verse or two.  
 Explain what the text means.  
 Apply the verse to your life.  
 Respond to God.

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17:1-2 The heartland of Benjamin and Judah was approachable from the coast through six valleys. The Philistines already had come up the Aijalon Valley (13:23). During the days of Samson (Jdg 13-16), they had come up the Sorek Valley. Now they were coming up the Valley of Elah and already controlled Socoh and Azekah. If they got much farther up the valley, they could come up the ridge route into the hill country and threaten Bethlehem, Hebron, and Saul's capital, Gibeah. The situation was desperate for Saul and his army.

17:3 The word translated "valley" in verse 2 designates a broad, flat valley. The word translated ravine denotes a narrower, more sharply defined valley or wadi. Today, the valley pinches in a bit east of Socoh, perhaps marking the site of the ancient conflict.

17:4 Recent archaeological finds at Tel es-Safi, the site of ancient Gath, confirm that the name Goliath was used among the Philistines around this period. Two other early manuscripts (LXX, DSS) state that Goliath was "six feet, nine inches tall." However, the description of Goliath's combat gear appears to support the larger height of nine feet, nine inches tall. At either height, Goliath would have towered over the much smaller Israelites.

17:5-7 The sheer spectacle of Goliath's armor and weapons frightened the Israelite army. At the same time, their weight would have restricted Goliath's agility. He probably assumed he would not have a prolonged fight with anyone.

17:8-9 Goliath challenged and taunted the Israelites. With his words Choose one of your men, Goliath suggested representative combat—the army of the losing combatant would become servants of the army of the victorious combatant.

17:10 The Hebrew word translated defy first came from Goliath's mouth, but it occurs four other times in the account (vv. 25,26,36,45), with the last three emphasizing Goliath's mocking of God's honor.

17:11 The Israelites needed their leader to articulate a plan of response, but King Saul had none.

17:20 David must have left very early in order to have made the 15-mile journey in time to see the army... marching out.

17:21 It appeared perhaps another day of standoff with the giant Goliath was forthcoming.

17:23 Came forward is literally "was going up." The expression may suggest Goliath approached a bit closer than before, actually coming part way up the ravine (v. 3). David heard Goliath's taunts—a subtle turning point in the account.

17:25 The victorious warrior would become Saul's son-in-law (18:18,23) and would enjoy privileges as part of the royal family.

17:26 David's words indicate he had not heard the announcement from Saul's assistant (v. 25). The word disgrace is related to defy (vv. 10,25-26,36). Uncircumcised denotes someone outside God's covenant. David saw the threat as not merely political (cp. v. 8) but theological. The armies of the living God, ironically, were terrified, but to David God's honor was at stake.

17:33 Saul rejected David's bold offer because David was just a youth, and because Goliath had been in training as a warrior from his youth.

17:34 Wild animals such as a lion or a bear were always threats to a lamb from the flock, and the shepherd's fighting ability was the lamb's only defense.

17:36 Lions and bears (lit "the lion and the bear") probably best gives the sense of the translation. David was probably describing his various encounters with wild animals rather than identifying two specific incidents. This

uncircumcised Philistine would suffer the same fate as these animals for his defiance of the Lord (see note at v. 26).

17:37 The word rescued is the same word that appeared in verse 35; David rescued the sheep, and God rescued him. Now, God would rescue His flock Israel. Encouraged by David's faith, Saul found the courage to invoke God's name in the blessing, May the Lord be with you.

17:38-39 Saul brought his own military clothes for David to wear, a fact that suggests that although he was the youngest, David may not have been smaller than the king. David tried on the bronze helmet and other armor, but he was not accustomed to wearing them, so he took them off. Ironically, it would not be the last time David wore a king's clothes.

17:40 Rather than wearing royal armor, David took weapons with which he was most familiar. The five smooth stones he chose would have been roughly the size of tennis balls and would fly straighter than jagged stones. As a shepherd, he had likely become proficient with his sling, which would also enable him to attack Goliath from a distance instead of in close combat, where the giant would have a big advantage.

17:42 Goliath saw David as an unfit challenge to his skill as a warrior. He was just a youth, and his features did not show that he had battle experience.

17:43 Goliath began his psychological warfare ("trash talk") against David by suggesting the staff David carried was fit only to beat a dog. The statement he cursed David by his gods further slants the account toward describing a battle between the gods of the Philistines and the God of Israel rather than just a battle between two men.

17:45 David's response to Goliath highlights the contrast in battle strategy. The Philistine relied on his dagger, spear, and sword (or sword, spear, and javelin), but David fought in the name of (as the representative of and with the authority of) Yahweh of Hosts, who was the God of Israel's armies. Goliath had defied Him, but now the Lord would triumph over him through His servant.

17:46 Hand you over to me is literally "shut you into my hand," or leave no way of escape. David's reference to the Philistine camp meant the outcome of their personal battle would have implications for the Philistine army. Birds of the sky and the creatures of the earth mimicked Goliath's mocking taunt (v. 44). David insisted that when victory was his, all the world would know that Israel had a God mighty enough to rescue in seemingly impossible situations. David's concern was that the nations would also know the power of Yahweh.

17:47 This whole assembly probably designates Israel's army, but it may include all who were present that day. David testified that the Lord saves, but not by sword or by spear. Since the battle was His, He would fight and win His way.

17:49 After a lengthy anticipation of the battle in the narrative, the battle was over almost as soon as it began. The words fell on his face describe Goliath falling face-forward. The force of the stone's impact likely rocked him backward initially, but then he either lurched forward again to complete his fall or spun around face first as he continued to fall back (away from David) to the ground.

17:50 This emphasizes the unlikelihood of David's victory, which gives glory to God. And killed him is a summary statement of the whole event. David landed the actual death blow not with a stone but with Goliath's own sword (v. 51).

17:51 Goliath was badly wounded but was yet living when David reached him. Unwilling to stop short of finishing his task, David used Goliath's own sword to kill him and cut off his head. Seeing that their official representative in this death match was dead, the Philistines turned and ran back down the valley toward Gath.