

David and Goliath

The Life of David—part 2

February 3, 2019

DAY 1: Goliath and the Philistine army

1. 1 Samuel 17 opens with the Philistine army lined up opposite the Israelite army. Israelite army is paralyzed in fear. So is King Saul.

1 Samuel 17:1 Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Socoh in Judah. They pitched camp at Ephes Dammim, between Socoh and Azekah.

1 Samuel 17:2 Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. ³ The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them.

2. Can you “see” the battle scene? The two armies are in a stand-off. The battle lines are drawn.

3. As if this scene is not already daunting enough, the Philistines have “an ace in hole.” A giant is in their midst.

1 Samuel 17:4 A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall. ⁵ He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels; ⁶ on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. ⁷ His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. His shield bearer went ahead of him.

4. Notice two things.

- a. First, notice Goliath’s daunting size and incredible strength.
- b. Second, notice the armament that Goliath carries with him.

5. If you were in the Israelite army, what would go through your mind when you saw Goliath?

6. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 2: The crisis worsens

1. As the two armies have a faceoff, Goliath strides out between the two armies daily.

1 Samuel 17:8 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.

2. Goliath makes several striking observations.

a. What does Goliath insinuate by his first question?

b. Goliath tells the Israelites that they are “servants of Saul.” Up until this time in Israel’s history the people were “the servants of God.” One wonders if the Philistines had heard that God had rejected Saul as king. Goliath insinuates that what was once a “done deal” victory won by God, was now a hopeless endeavor.

c. Goliath now moves from taunting Israel to challenging Israel.

1 Samuel 17:9 "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."

3. Imagine you are an Israelite soldier. You are facing a battle that may cost you your life. But now this new challenge changes the landscape.

a. If you had a family, now the issue becomes whether or not your family would become slaves to the Philistines!

b. What chance would anyone have of defeating Goliath in a one-on-one battle?

1 Samuel 17:10 Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other."¹¹ On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

4. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 3: David volunteers and is met with a stinging rebuke

1. For almost forty days, Goliath had marched out between the armies with his taunting and his challenge. The soldiers remained terrified and dismayed.

2. Meanwhile, Jesse, David's father decides to send food to the battle front.

3. When David arrives to deliver food to his brothers he is struck by the army's standoff, and hears Goliath's taunts and challenge for himself. David talks to some of the men in the army.

4. Then, David's oldest brother sees young David and confronts him with critical and accusatory words.

1 Samuel 17:28 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 desert? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle."

5. Eliab had been "passed over" as king, in favor of David. Perhaps Eliab was bitter. After all, the lineage of kings for nations surrounding Israel had been all about the first-born sons.

6. Look back at the accusations of Eliab. Some are in the form of a question. Some are direct accusations. What strikes you about what Eliab said?

7. Notice that Eliab told David that he knew "how wicked your heart is." In one sense, that statement is true about all of us, but that is not what Eliab is implying.

8. In contrast, remember that God told the prophet Samuel that "God looks on the heart," and that David's heart was one of the chief reasons of God's selection of David as the next king!

9. That Eliab could be so wrong and determinedly wrong about David is stunning. It is an illustration of our own human hearts.

10. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 4: David's confidence. Based on what?

1. David hears the repeated taunts of Goliath. Then he hears the challenge Goliath makes for the one-on-one, winner take all fight.

2. David talks to King Saul, and volunteers!

3. Today, we'll see three separate items that gave David incredible confidence to take on Goliath.

1 Samuel 17:34 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, ³⁵ 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.

a. First, David's confidence came from his experience and success.

(You may wonder how young David killed both a bear and a lion. If you don't know the story of Goliath yet, you wouldn't know that David was an expert with a sling and a stone. He will take down the giant, Goliath, with one shot of a smooth stone, a direct hit to the forehead, killing him instantly).

1 Samuel 17:36 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.

b. The second reason for David's confidence is stated here in v. 36. What had Goliath done that made it a certainty that victory would occur?

c. The third reason for David's confidence comes in v. 37.

1 Samuel 17:37 The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you."

4. What strikes you about David's three reasons for his ironclad confidence?

5. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 5: Victory!

As you read the victory account, underline David's words and actions that strike you as important:

1 Samuel 17:40 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.

⁴¹ *Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David.*

⁴² *He looked David over and saw that he was only a boy, ruddy and handsome, and he despised him.* ⁴³ *He said to David, "Am I a dog that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.* ⁴⁴ *"Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!"*

⁴⁵ *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.*

⁴⁶ *This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel.*

⁴⁷ *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."*

⁴⁸ *As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him.*

⁴⁹ *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.*

⁵⁰ *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.*

⁵¹ *David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the scabbard. 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.*

⁵² *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.*

2. What words and actions stood out to you the most?

3. How would you describe David's attitude in this sequence of events?

4. What strikes you from today's devotional?