

The Hall of Faith: David

Hebrews 11:32

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, May 7, 2023

Like many of you, my wife and I enjoy reading books to our family. And recently, we've been reading the *Pilgrim's Progress*. And I don't know if you've ever read that book before, I would encourage you to do it. But if you have, you'll know it tells a story of a man named Christian, who begins by having a massive burden on his back. Remember that? The burden is so bad, big and so heavy that he can't get it off his mind. It's there when he goes to work. It's there when he eats at the table. It's there when he lies down at night. The burden is just always there; it's representative of his sin. And the story goes on and tells about the time he comes to the cross. Someone points him to the cross, a man named Evangelist does, and he goes there, and the burden rolls off his back. But the interesting thing about his story is from that point on, his life does not get easier. Now the burden is gone. He's covered with new clothes, and he's overjoyed; but he goes down a hard journey. And the journey has mountains, and it has valleys, and it has monsters and it has trials and it has tribulations, but the one thing that keeps him going through the whole journey is the heavenly city. He always has his mind fixed on the end goal, and that is God and glory and Paradise. I tell you that because if you open your Bibles to the book of Hebrews chapter 11, there's just a verse, this is not what our sermon's about, this is just what's on my heart this morning. But if you look in Hebrews 11:39, after going through this great stuff on the Hall of Faith that we've been talking about, there's a phrase that it uses here, I just want to put your attention toward just to get our minds on the Word of God this morning. But it says in verse 39, "And all these having gained approval through their faith did not receive what was promised because God had provided something better for us." And the word I want you to focus on as you read that is that word better. Aren't you looking for something better today? Amen. Didn't you come to church to find a better world?

My parents just moved back to the town I grew up in in Tennessee, and I haven't had any contact with people from that little town of about 10,000 people, in the middle of nowhere. If you look in the phone book, Frog Jump and Possum Trot are in the phone book. That's how small the town is. And I haven't talked to these people in a long, long time. And my mom was telling me updates on this person. And that person, one of them committed suicide recently, one of the men I went to high school with. Another one is a man I played tennis with all the time; he was kind of a mentor of mine, married another man. And I hear all this, and my heart breaks, and I think I'm just sick of this world. I'm tired of it. I mean, what do you have to look forward to? You can't even go back to the place you grew up in and find joy in that? Well, the book of Hebrews says God has provided that for us in the Lord Jesus Christ. If you want something better, you turn to Christ. If you want something beyond this world, you go to the cross where the burden is rolled away, and you begin that journey toward the heavenly city. And keep your eyes pointed there. Again, that's not what our sermon's about, that's just something that's been on my mind.

Why don't we pray for a moment, and then we'll dive into our subject for today.

Heavenly Father, we are looking for a better place. I think all of us want to see a heavenly city. This world and its sorrows and tribulations and pains and conflict and wars, and it just gets overwhelming for us sometime. But I pray, you would help us to remember what the man Christian in *Pilgrim's Progress* remembered. And that is that there is a better place for those who believe in Christ. Lord, would our eyes always be fixed on that. And as we approach the Word of God this morning, may we approach it with a hunger for finding better things. We thank You for the life of David and just how he was constantly looking for better things in you than this world has. Lord, we thank You that we are able to be lights in the world, and we're able to tell others about Christ, and those who are in despair and suicidal, and those who are committing sins, like the sin of marrying a man with a man. We're able to share the gospel with them below. Lord, we can only do that if we have our priorities in the right place. Please help us to do that as a church. Help us to do that as brothers and sisters in Christ and would You help us to take the worldly things off our minds this morning so we could focus on the Word of God? We pray that in Jesus' name, amen.

Well, this morning after spending several months on the subject, we are coming to our last sermon on the Hall of Faith. It's quite an achievement for us. We started studying it on January 22nd of this year, and we've spent about 13 weeks or so going carefully through it because I felt like this was such an important part of the Bible, we couldn't pass over it quickly. It's been said some parts of the Bible you fly over, while other ones you dive into like a submarine. This is kind of a submarine type of topic. You've got to go deep as you study it. And with that said, today, we're looking at one of the last people in here, and that's David, the great king of Israel. We're not going to look at every single person in the section just because the author mentioned some of them by passing over them not going into too much detail. So we're going to do the same. But we're looking at this man in Hebrews 11:32. If your Bibles are open there, you can just look there with me. Because the author writes, and he says,

And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions,

When you look at your Bibles here, when the author mentions the name David and Samuel, he's describing two men from the time of the kings. Gideon Barak, Samson and Jephthah: those were men from the time of Judges, a different stage in the life of Israel. But David and Samuel were from a time of the Jewish monarchy, when Israel had one sole ruler over the country. Samuel's life actually spans both ages because he was a judge and someone who appointed king; so he wore both hats. But in order to talk about this, if you would turn in your Bibles to another book as well. Turn to 1 Samuel because it tells us about the time when Samuel anointed David to be the king. So if you want to put these two men together, you can do that in the Old Testament book of 1 Samuel, in chapter 16. Let me just read this to you. Starting in verse one. It says,

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.” 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.’ 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.” 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?” 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.

When they entered, he looked at Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed is before Him.” 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.” Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, “The Lord has not chosen this one either.” Next Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “The Lord has not chosen this one either.” Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen these.” 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.”

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.” 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.

We’ll stop the reading there, but if you notice, this is the first time David's name is mentioned in the story. And verse one gives you the background when it says that the Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel?” And the key word there is the word “king.” It tells you at this point in the Bible, this is what Israel had. They had a king, or one person who ruled the nation over everybody else. That's different from the way it was laid out before. If you remember before this, the Jews had Judges, or men and women who ruled over them periodically in stops in spurts. So when the Jews were oppressed, they would call out to God and the Lord would send them a man like Barak who would step in and help them and save them and rule for a few years and then fade off. And then when they were oppressed again, they would call out to God again, and the Lord would send them another person like Gideon, who would step in and help them and rule again and save them from their oppressors; and then he would leave. Then, when they were oppressed, they would call out to God again, and he would send someone like Samson, who would then

do the same thing, and Tola and Jair, and all these people at various times. But apparently, after doing that for a while, that Jews kind of grew tired of it. And so they asked the Lord for a more permanent solution to the problem. They wanted a king, but the problem is they asked the wrong way.

If you remember the story, 1 Samuel 8 tells us that when they came to Samuel, they said, “Now appoint a king for us to judge, like the nations” and that was the issue. The Jews wanted to be like their neighbours. They looked at the pagan peoples around them, and they said, “They have a king, so we want a king. They have an earthly ruler, we want an earthly ruler,” which grieved the heart of God because the Lord told Samuel, “I was their king. They rejected me. I was the ruler, but apparently that's not good enough.” So He gave them what they wanted, and He gave them a king named Saul, who didn't do a very good job. He ignored the Word of God. Disobeyed, started running the country into the ground; so in His mercy and kindness and grace, the Lord sent Samuel to find another king and a better one.

And if you look in this story in 1 Samuel 16, verse one says he goes to the house of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, or Jesse from Bethlehem. That's an important detail because if you remember, that's the place where Ruth came from in the book of Ruth. The Bible tells us she married Boaz and started a family in Bethlehem. They had a son named Obed, who had a son named Jesse and that's this guy here. So even though Ruth was a Gentile and a Moabite and an outcast to the people of Israel, when she trusted in God, the Jews accepted her, embraced her as their own, and she would eventually become the grandmother to this man, or the great grandmother to David really. In the line of the ancestor, the Messiah; That's pretty neat.

And when they entered the place where they were making a sacrifice, verse six tells us that Samuel looks at the first son, Eliab. And he says to himself, “Surely the Lord's anointed is before him.” In other words, this has got to be the guy. He looks like a king to me. He walks like a king, talks like a king, big as a king, very kingly in his demeanor, has kingly manners. The Lord says, “No, that's not what I want.” Then Jesse has the next son, Abinadab pass in front of them. And Samuel says the same thing. No. And then he has the next son passed before him, and he says, “No.” And the next one, the next one, the next one, all the way down through all the seven sons, which concerns Samuel because he's thinking something's wrong here. So he looks at Jesse in verse 11, he asks him, “Are these all the children?” And Jesse says, “No, there remains the youngest, but he's so young he's tending sheep.” Not a very good beginning for a king by the way. He's so insignificant, we forgot about him. We thought he'd be better off out there watching animals. So Samuel told him to bring him in. Verse 12 says he sent and brought him in and anointed him.

Now that may sound a little strange to your ears. But when he mentioned the process of anointing, that refers to the act of pouring oil on someone's head as a sign that God had set them aside for an office. The way it works is that when the Jews wanted to publicly demonstrate that a new king had come to the throne and was taking the place of the old one, they didn't hold a parade like we would do today, they

would do this. They would have a prophet prepare a flask or perfume-based ointment mixed with spices, and he would then proceed to hold some type of ceremony where he would have the candidate drop down on his knees and he would put it on top of him in order to signify that the Lord is with him. And just like the oil was covering his body, the presence of God was coming upon him. First Samuel 10 says Samuel did a similar thing for Saul when he became king; he anointed him too, so this wasn't the first time he did that.

But now the Lord repeats the process for David; not because he's the oldest member of the family because he's not, and not because he's the biggest and tallest and strongest, but because of his heart. Verse seven says, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.", which means "When God chooses a man to be king, the criterion are different from yours, Samuel. He doesn't do it based on the condition of his body so not the outer man, but the inner man." God just wants to know that he loves Him. And that's all. I mean, David's life is a reminder from the very beginning that God's ways are not our ways. And His thoughts are not our thoughts. And when God chooses someone, He's not looking for the strongest of men to serve Him. He's looking for the humblest, and the lowest in their own eyes. Because a humble man puts God up here, and a humble man sets God on the throne, and the humble man gives Him all the glory for the things He's done. And that's why the Lord chose David. David lived, you can read his life, there was a few times he made mistakes, absolutely, but for the most part, he lived to serve one great purpose, and that was the glory of God. The world doesn't do that today, does it? When they're selecting kings and politicians and leaders, they look for guys with nice hair. They look for guys with money. God looks for something like this. In fact, when you read the Bible, you find that there's a nickname that the Lord gave David on several occasions, you remember what it was, he was called the man after God's own heart. Which means that when God went one way, David followed. And when the Lord did this, David tried to do the same. He loved Him so much, he just couldn't help himself.

Which is why you can learn so much from him today. I think it's safe to say we all need to live in a more Godward direction, amen? We all need to have God on our heart. We're so easily distracted from these outward things. And so that's why we want to talk about him this morning. And to be honest, we can't get into every aspect of David's life. His name is mentioned almost 1,000 times in the Bible. And so there's too much material in here to get to everything. So we'll just be able to talk about one story and relate it to him, and that's the story of David and Goliath. So if you're taking notes, this is what we're going to talk about this morning. But in the book of 1 Samuel 17, we're gonna look at five ways David demonstrated faith in the story of David and Goliath. So five ways he demonstrated faith in this story, the next story in the book here.

And the first one is in the way he was introduced. So the first way that David's faith is demonstrated in the story of David and Goliath is in the introduction to him. Because in the introduction, the author compares David with Goliath. And he puts the two people side by side in order to ask which one do you think will win in a battle, right? The little guy or the big guy? And the answer is most people would

think the big guy would win. And if you read in 1 Samuel 17, this is how this story begins. After talking about David's anointing and a few things related to Saul, in chapter 17, the author says this, it says.

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. 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. The Philistines stood on the mountain on one side while Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with the valley between them. Then a champion came out from the armies of the Philistines named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. He had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was clothed with scale-armor which weighed five thousand shekels of bronze. He also had bronze greaves on his legs and a bronze javelin slung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and the head of his spear weighed six hundred shekels of iron; his shield-carrier also walked before him. 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. 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." Again the Philistine said, "I defy the ranks of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together." When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

Now, we'll stop the reading there. Now, if you notice, this passage starts off by saying the Philistines had gathered their armies for battle. That means after David is anointed and the Lord had set him aside to be the future king and after giving some other descriptions in here about a few other things, the people of Philistia rose up to fight the Jews. Now the word Philistine comes from a word that means Palestine. So some scholars believe that the Philistines were the original inhabitants of Palestine. According to Genesis 10:14, they were descendants of Noah through his son, Ham. And apparently, they had settled into this part of the world, maybe before anyone else did. So they could trace their genealogy back to ancient times, which is why they fought with the Jews so much, because when the Jews came into the Promised Land, the Philistines said, "Not so fast. This belongs to us." You remember last time, Samson fought against the Philistines. This is the same people. All throughout his life he was trying to marry into them, and then he would fight them. And then he would try to get along with them and fight them again that Samson story. The book of Judges says Shamgar and Jephthah also fought the Philistines and so did King Saul, which is what's going on right here.

Because verse two says at this point, the conflict had escalated to the point that Saul the men of Israel were gathered against them and drew themselves up in battle array to fight. And as they did that, verse three tells you that the Philistines were on one side stood on the mountain on one side, the Jews on the other, a valley in between them.

And then a champion came out from the Philistines named Goliath to challenge them. That means he walked right in the middle of the two armies and shouted his words. The reason he did that was at this time, wars could be costly. So you could lose a lot of men if everybody just charged into each other. So sometimes the kings would choose a fighter from each side and have them fight and the idea was the winner would determine the outcome of the battle. So if you won, those people became your servants, and vice versa.

And in order to do this, the king of the Philistines chose a man named Goliath whose name comes from an ancient word that means destroyer, quite a name. He was like a man who wrecked things; tore them down due to his size. The passage here, if you look in your Bible, says he was six cubits and a span. The MacArthur Study Bible says that means he was about nine feet tall or the size of a basketball goal. So if you go out of church this morning, and you walk into the gym and look at the net, somewhere in there, that's about how tall he was. A very big man, a mountain of a guy. The passage also says his armor weighed 5,000 shekels of bronze, or 125 pounds, which is about the weight of a person that was on his body to protect him in combat. The head of his spear weighed 600 shekels or 15 pounds – not the spear itself, but the head of at the very end. So this guy was intimidating. I'm a little guy so I can relate to this. Anybody over six foot tall is intimidating to me. The Cagles are short people, but I have an Uncle Harold who's six foot four and I always thought he was a giant but that's like three feet under this. Two and a half feet under. I mean, this was intimidating. How would you kill a guy like this? You can't hit him with the sword because you can't get close enough. He's gonna swing that spear at you when you're a long way off. And if you shoot an arrow at him, his armor is so tough, he's almost indestructible. He would look like a tank to the Jews. Some people have wondered how Goliath could be that big. But Deuteronomy three tells us he's not the only person in the Bible who's described this way. That when the Jews were in the wilderness before this, they came upon a man named Og, king of Bashan, whose bed was 13 feet in length and six feet wide. So he was a very large man as well. And then also 2 Samuel 21 tells us about the time that Jews fought another man in Gath who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. Remember that? And it said he was born to a giant it actually uses the word. But the point is that there some people like this back then.

And this man came with an agenda because he said, "Choose a man and let him come down to me. Pick a warrior and let's fight. Choose a soldier and let me face him." And no one took him up on it. Verse 11 tells you that King Saul and the Jews were greatly afraid of him. In fact, if you look in verse 16, it says the Philistine came forward morning and evening for 40 days and took his stand. He did this over and over again.

Which is not a good way to start the story. It sounds very discouraging. But if you notice, verse 12 says, "Now, David," and why does it do that? The author's just introduced you to David. He's already said some words about him. Why does he bring him up again? Well, he does that because what he's saying here is that these two men are about to face off. You could almost look at it, in my mind, I looked at it like an introduction to a boxing match, where the author says in this corner, you have Goliath, the

champion, the great victory of the Philistines, standing over nine feet tall, weighing who knows how many pounds. And then in this corner, you have David standing, we don't know how tall he was five foot tall, maybe six feet tall, weighing 160 pounds soaking wet? Which one do you think's gonna come out victorious? He's asking you; he's building up the suspense. Which one do you think will be standing when the dust settles? Everybody would have said Goliath. Nobody would have picked David. This guy's mincemeat. He's chopped liver. He's in trouble.

Now, to be fair, verse 18 says David was a mighty man of valor at this point. And he was a warrior. He was no sissy. He had a reputation in Israel for being a fighter to some people. But the problem was, it was just nothing compared to this. I mean, as far as we can tell, at this point of time, he's not served in the army, yet. He's the youngest man in his father's family. In fact, Numbers 1:3 says that Jewish men were expected to be at least 20 years old before they could join the military. And so some have speculated that David was probably under that age. However old he was, he didn't have tons of experience in life. But as you're gonna see in a moment, he goes on to defeat him; he will beat the giant. And the question is 'how?' And the answer is 'by faith'. David's going to defeat this giant and overcome him because he trusts in God. And that's all. David knows he couldn't do it in his own strength. He does it in the strength of God.

That's what everyone does in the Hall of Faith. I mean, when Moses goes to Pharaoh, that's a lopsided contest, isn't it? There's no way Moses could walk into the courts of Egypt and make him let God's people go. But he could do it in faith. Same way when Gideon fights the Midianites; that's 300 Jews against a force of more than 100,000. How would you win? Through the power that God provides. Same way with Samson; he killed 1,000 Philistines at once. It goes on and on and on. Because it's not about these people; it's about the Lord.

Which brings you to another way David demonstrates faith in the story of David and Goliath. And that is through his humble service before the battle. The second way he demonstrates faith in the story of David and Goliath is through his humility. Because when you first see David, this is what he's doing. He's not on the battlefield making boasts. He's not going around telling everybody how great he is. He's not telling everyone, "Bring me someone to fight." He's just humbly serving. That's why the story is so endearing. He's just helping his dad out, helping Saul.

If you read in verses 12 through 16, it goes on to tell you more about David. And it says,

Now David was the son of the Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, whose name was Jesse, and he had eight sons. And Jesse was old in the days of Saul, advanced in years among men. 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 firstborn, and the second to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. David was the youngest. Now the three oldest followed Saul, but David went back and forth

from Saul to tend his father's flock at Bethlehem. The Philistine came forward morning and evening for forty days and took his stand.

Now, I didn't have a chance to tell you this earlier. But when verse 15 says that David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's flock, that's referring to the fact that after David was anointed by Samuel, the Bible tells us that the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and an evil spirit began to torment him, so that he was meant miserable. So in order to help him, Saul's servants found someone to play the harp for him, and that was David. He would go back and forth between his home in Bethlehem to Saul, in order to help comfort him when he was troubled. It wasn't a full-time thing for him. It was just a part time job.

The rest of the time he served in his father's household with the sheep. It was a common occupation at the time. A lot of people in the Bible served as shepherds. Abraham was a shepherd. Isaac was a shepherd, Jacob was a shepherd, and Moses was a shepherd. So was the prophet Amos later on, because the central part of Israel where Bethlehem was was too rocky to grow crops, because it was located on a plateau that was 35 miles long and 15 miles wide. It had very little good soil on it. So instead of raising plants, they would raise sheep there. Not on large farms like we have here in British Columbia, but on small family run operations with a few dozen sheep or so; maybe 100 sheep in some cases, and it had to be mobile. Because the way it works is that since the ground was so dry, the sheep would eat up all the vegetation rather quickly. And so they would have to bounce around from one place to another in that vicinity. Verse 15 here says David was tending his father's flock at Bethlehem when these events transpired. But the truth is that if the story goes on, he would be in Bethlehem, and he would go here and just move around. Which was a lot of work because in order to move sheep like that, you would have to count them first and inspect them to make sure you weren't missing someone, not one of them got lost by mistake. And then you'd have to plan your route or arrange where you were going to go, then you would have to go there and wait and watch and keep them safe so that no predators would attack. And the author's saying this to say this is how David's spent his time as the youngest member of the family. He would keep track of these animals.

And the interesting thing here is that it means that not only was he smaller than Goliath in age and size, but he's less important than Goliath in the eyes of society because shepherding was kind of a job for servants to do. If you're wealthy, you would own the sheep; but it was for someone else to watch over them. It was kind of a secondary thing. And this is how David would have appeared to people back then. He was just a servant.

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. 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.

In other words, when this whole story transpires, David's not going there to fight; he's going to bring them lunch. He's showing up to be a servant, and give his brother some food. He would end up fighting, but not because that was the intention of the journey. And the point is that David did all this because he was humble. He obeyed his father; he obeyed Saul; he went back and forth between the two because he wasn't proud. He was very low in his own eyes. C.S. Lewis once said that "Humility is not thinking less about yourself. It's thinking about yourself less." And thinking about God more. And his whole life David was learning how to do that with these very menial tasks. If you can't handle the menial tasks of life, you're not going to handle the great ones, right? And if you can't do simple things like playing the harp for the king, or serving in the sheepfold, you can't fight giants. You have got to learn the small stuff first.

Which brings us to another way that David demonstrates faith in his story, and that is in how he talks to the soldiers once he shows up on the battlefield. The third way he demonstrates faith is in how he talks to the soldiers. Because when he shows up at the camp and brings food, he hears what Goliath is saying and he doesn't like it. If you look in verse 20, it says,

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. Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle array, army against army. 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. 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.

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

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?" The people answered him in accord with this word, saying, "Thus it will be done for the man who kills him."

Now, if you notice, as you read this, it's not accidental that David showed up at this time in this place. The Lord is orchestrating all these events. Because verse 20 says he leaves early in the morning, and comes to the circle of the camp, that means the outer circle while the army was going into battle array. In other words, David didn't arrive at an accidental moment or a random time; he did it when the soldiers were going to war. Now the Lord had ordained that. That's God's sovereign hand.

And while he's there, verse 23 says he hears the giant's challenge, because it says that he got to see him come out and stand in the valley between the two mountains and say that "I defy the ranks of Israel" and go through this whole speech. "Bring me a man to fight." That's not random either. Which leads to David's reaction because in verse 24, he gets angry about it, doesn't he? He says, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he would talk like that?" In verse 26, "For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should taunt the armies of the living God." The reason he was angry is he saw how the Jews broke away and scattered every time Goliath came up. He saw how they were afraid and terrified at him. And if you notice, in this passage here, he doesn't say, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should talk the armies of *Saul*." That's not the most important thing to David. That's not what he's focused on here. And he doesn't say, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he would mock the armies of *Israel*?" That's not what's on his mind either. He says, "Who is this Philistine, that he would taunt the armies of *God*." So again, he's the man after God's own heart, he's consumed with the glory of God. Because in David's mind, this is the same God who created the world and everything in it. And this is the same God who made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them this land. This is the same God who defeated Egypt and the armies of Pharaoh, and the same God who brought the people through the wilderness, given them manna to eat and water from the rock. This is the same God who brought them into the Promised Land under Joshua and helped them to conquer most of it. This is the same God who gave them victories in the judges through Gideon and Barak and Samson, and all those guys. And this is the same God who made Saul king over Israel, and anointed David to take his place. And what he's wondering here is just "Who does this man think he is to talk to the armies of God like that?" Will somebody's silence him?" David says, "Will somebody cut him down and wipe the smile off his face. If you don't, I will."

I don't know about you, but when I read this, I can almost see David jumping up and down on the sidelines. He's kind of like a player who's sitting on the basketball game on the bench saying, "Put me in coach. I want to play. Let me at him. I'll fight Goliath. I'll put him in his place." In my mind it's like a chihuahua barking at a bear. Have you ever seen a chihuahua dog when they get worked up but they're not afraid of anything? They'll bite anybody's ankle. David's ready to discharge off in the battle you almost got to pull him back by the scruff of his neck. And Isaiah said in Isaiah 6, after the Lord said, "Who shall I send?" Remember that? Isaiah said, "Send me. I'll go. Pick me. Lord. You want a Preacher? I'll be a preacher. You want a prophet? I'll be a prophet. You need someone to confront your enemies? I'll do that. I'll do anything for you, God. You name it, I'll do it." That's how a believer acts. That's David's mindset here. When you have faith in God, you don't stand on the sidelines watching the battle; you get in and fight. And you don't stand back in the camp watching a pagan like Goliath taunt the army; you pick up your weapons, and you go to war. You can't help it. There's something in you just compelling you in that direction.

Some of you have heard this before. But David has several nicknames in the Bible. But another one is Israel's warrior poet because he could write the most beautiful poetry in the book of Psalms, and the

most lovely music you've ever looked at. But at the same time, there was something in him that boiled over with rage anytime he felt like the name of God was being insulted. Which is why he's asking the men in the army, "What's going to be done for the man who kills this guy? Somebody's got to kill him. I'll do it if no one else."

And if you look in verse 28, you can see how his oldest brother responds to this. It's good to have brothers, by the way. Brothers always take us down a notch if they think we're out of line. Because verse 28, says, "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." In other words, "David, be quiet. Sit down. You're not a warrior. You're not in the army. You don't know what you're talking about." Brothers, brothers, brothers, right? This is the age-old thing with family. He says, "Leave the fighting to the real men." But David's problem is that the real men weren't fighting. Were they? David's whole issue here is that "Okay, well, if you do your job, I don't have to do it for you."

Which brings you to another way that David demonstrates his faith in the story of David and Goliath, and that is in how he talks to the king. So we just saw how he talks to the army or the people in the camp there on the battle lines. But a fourth way he demonstrates faith is in how he talks to the king. Because after David goes around, speaking out against Goliath within the camp of Israel, a very strange thing happens, and that is that he's brought before Saul. If you look in verse 31 it says, "When the words which David spoke were heard, they told them to Saul, and he sent for him."

I had a friend who fought in the US Marine Corps, and he told me that the worst thing you can do in combat is stand out. You don't want to stand out in a battlefield or in an army. You want everybody to forget you're there. You want to blend into the back. David is standing out here. Because you may read this and you wonder, "Well, what's going on?" Why would Saul send for David? Who's David? Why is he sending for him? Because David is the only one in Israel brave enough to fight Goliath. He's the only one saying anything about it. And so Saul's real curious as to what's going - who is this guy?

And when he shows up there, before the king can even get a word out of his mouth, David says this in verse 32. "Let no man's heart fail on account of him" on account of Goliath, "your servant will go and fight the Philistine." Now just pause for a moment and let this sink in. Remember the setting. David's just come in from the fields. Maybe he still has his farm clothes on, we don't know. But he's approached the camp from the place where he's watching sheep, which was a humbling thing to do in Israel. It was not a very glorious task. And now he talks to the king, and he tells him not to be afraid. You can imagine what's going on in Saul's head. He might have been wondering, "Who are you again? Oh, yeah, you're the guy that plays the harp for me. What are you going to do to the giant? Play the harp for him? You're the guy that soothes me when I'm upset. Well, how are you going to defeat that guy? You're going to soothe him too?"

Now remember, David was called a mighty warrior before and valiant and those types of things, but Saul might not have seen him fight. So he says rather mildly in verse 33, “You're not able to do this for you're just a youth.” It's what everybody's kind of been hinting at in the story. So David says in verse 34, says,

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, 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. 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.” 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.

Now that's David's way of saying, “Well, hold on for a second king. Not so fast. You're right in saying that I don't have a lot of experience in battlefield, war type combat, but that doesn't mean I haven't fought anybody. I've fought a bear. That says something. I've fought a lion when lions tried to take the sheep away from me. So how much scarier can Goliath be than a lion? It's a pretty good argument.

And they've done studies on this and found that lions are now extinct in that part of Israel, but they were once pretty common there, they would roam freely in the land, especially in the countryside. Samson encountered one in the book of Judges and killed it with his bare hands. Second Samuel 23 says that another person named Benaiah encountered one on a snowy day and killed it in a pit, because they did roam around the country. And the lion David is describing here is known as the Asiatic lion. Different sources say it's about eight feet long and three and a half feet tall or so. It weighs close to 400 pounds; it's a large animal. And it's very fast; It can go up to 50 miles an hour in short bursts. So the last thing you'd want to do is come between that and a sheep. And the worst thing that could happen is you'd have a lion like that attack you in the middle of the night, and the only thing that you have to fight him is your slingshot or your staff or something like that. And that's what David's talking about here because he says that “I did that. On a number of occasions when a lion or bear came to attack me and tried to take a sheep from the flock, I went after him and attacked him in order to rescue it.”

And the idea is that if God could take care of me, then He'll do it now. If the Lord is sovereign enough to protect me in that moment, He'll protect me in this one. Because David acknowledges to the king, that the Lord is preparing me for this. All that time in the fields watching and waiting and caring for sheep was not wasted. And all those days rescuing them and protecting them and keeping them from predators, the Lord took it, and He's going to use it for something greater. Sometimes God does that, doesn't he? He takes our times of waiting and uses them. Sometimes He allows us to go through seasons that are hard or humbling in order to train us up for better things. I'm sure there were times when David was in the fields wondering, “What am I doing here? Why in the world am I staying behind when my brothers are going to fight?” But he stayed behind so he would get ready for this.

And apparently this argument convinced Saul because Saul says in verse 37 at the end of the verse, “Go and may the Lord be with you.” In other words, “go ahead and fight then David. I mean if you want to go to battle with this guy, go to battle, you have my blessing. I won't try to stop you.”

And it leads to a scene where Saul gives David his armor to wear and David can't do it because he hasn't tested it yet, it says. So he goes out to meet Goliath with nothing on but his ordinary clothes, which again shows you how lopsided this battle is gonna be. Because remember, Goliath has all this armor and shield and spear and all that kind of stuff. Verse 40 of the text here says, “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.”

Which brings it to a final way David demonstrates faith in the story, and that is by facing Goliath. And that's really the climax of this whole thing. And this is what everything's been building up to so far in the story. This is the time when he goes out and fights this man. And I want to read this part of the passage in its entirety. I think it would be helpful to do that. If you look in verse 41 it says,

Then the Philistine came on and approached David, with the shield-bearer in front of him. When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, with a handsome appearance. The Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 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.” Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, 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. 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, 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.”

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. 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.

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. 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. The men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines as far as the valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And

the slain Philistines lay along the way to Shaaraim, even to Gath and Ekron. The sons of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines and plundered their camps. Then David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his weapons in his tent.

Now, I don't want to say too much about all of that because it's pretty self-explanatory. But if you notice, this battle comes in a few stages here.

The first one is you have the pause before the fight where the two men look at each other and take stock of what they see. And then when they do that, you can tell Goliath is not very impressed. I mean, just like everyone else who meets David, he kind of shrugged them off. Verse 42, says, "When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, with a handsome appearance." And the word for ruddy is a word that means rosy or red cheeked because that's what David's face looked like to the giant; it was kind of flushed. Could be because David was angry at him and itching for a fight, or it could be that just how his natural expression was. But either way, Goliath disdains him, which is another word that means he expresses contempt. He looks at him and almost spits. He's kind of saying, "Is this the best you got? You're coming to me with a stick. What do you think I am? A dog? You're gonna beat me with it." And in response, David goes on to give a long description of what he will do after the Lord gives Goliath into his hands. And he doesn't spare any details. When you're on a battlefield, you don't usually talk a long time. People are kind of tongue tied. They're nervous. David talks from verse 44 all the way down to verse 47 in order to say that the Lord will give you into my hands, I'll strike you down, remove your head, and give the bodies of your armies to the birds. It's a very bold thing to say. It's kind of his way of saying, "Stop playing games, let's just fight."

Which gives the next phase and that's the actual fight itself. Because verse 48 says that as the Philistine approaches David, David runs quickly to the battle line because he's itching to get on with it. One reason he ran quickly was because he didn't have any armour on, so he can move pretty fast. But another reason he ran quickly was he's just not afraid. It might have shocked Goliath; we don't know. But I would imagine he probably would have thought David would have run from him like everybody else in Israel, but he doesn't. He's going toward him. And when he reaches the lines, verse 48 says David put his hand into his bag and pulled out a stone and slung it.

Now, let me explain this because I think this is part of the story that's often misunderstood. Because when some people read this passage about slinging a stone, they think it's it would look like one of those slingshots they have in Canadian Tire that your kids pick up and they you know, shoot like that. It's not the idea here. The Bible says that stone throwing was a major part of Israel's arsenal. The Jews were very good at it. The book of Judges says some of the Jews could sling a stone at a hair's breadth and not miss. They could shoot and hit something with deadly accuracy. These are ancient times before the arrival of modern warfare equipment. So in order to hit an object far away, you only have so many choices, and this was one of them. And they practiced it a lot. The sling shots that they used were composed of leather about three feet long, three feet or so, two inches wide with a pocket on the end

where the stone would go. In order to use it, I saw different videos on this, they would kind of wind it up like this, or maybe even side arm somehow and sling it that way. And the idea was, the faster you swung it, the farther the stone would grow and the bigger an impact it would make. Archaeologists have even found the remains of some of these slings in parts of the desert. And they found that the pockets in them were about the size of a tennis ball. So these weren't small stones they were slinging, they were very large. In fact, verse 40 says David picked up five smooth stones from a brook in the valley of Issa. My wife and I've actually been to that brook and picked up five smooth stones from there. That's one of the things you do when you're a tourist in Israel. They always take you there; everybody wants to know where David fought Goliath. The only problem is that so many tourists go to that brook every year and pull stones out of it, that they run out of them. So the Israeli government has to dump tons of rocks from somewhere else into the brook. So we have stones that are from the brook, but they're not from the brook. It's very confusing to me, personally. But the point is, David is not indulging in child's play. When he threw this stone, he knew what he was doing. This was a tried and tested form of warfare that Jews had been engaged in for a long time.

And it brings you to the last part of the battle, and that's the death of Goliath because verse 49 says, as he threw that stone, it struck the Philistine on the forehead, and the stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the ground. Now, the interesting thing about that is that stones hit people's heads on a battlefield. It wasn't all that unusual. That's why he wore a helmet. But the unusual thing is that it sank into his forehead, and he fell face first, which means it hit him here, and he kind of rocked, and planted. Which led David to run up to him and take Goliath's sword, because he didn't have a sword, and cut his head off. It sounds pretty gruesome, and there's some discrepancy as to what's going on here because verse 50, says he struck him with the stone, and it killed him. Then verse 51 says David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him. It could mean that the stone dazed him for a moment and the sword finished the job. Or it could mean that the stone was the source of Goliath's death, but David cut his head off in order to show the army. I mean, remember that they're fighting as the representatives of the army. And everybody would have wondered when Goliath fell over, what had just happened. But if you hold up his severed head, everybody knows what happened. He's not dazed, this man's dead.

And everybody knew it, which is why verse 51 says the Philistines ran away. David and Goliath are fighting as those representatives, so if Goliath won, the Jews are supposed to become their servants; if David won, the Philistines are supposed to become the Jew's servants. David won; the Jews won, so the Philistines fled. They didn't want to be their servants, which allowed the Jews to chase them for a long way.

But the point is that all this started with David's faith, didn't it? It all began when one man trusted in God when everyone else didn't. The rest of the Jews were afraid; they were terrified. They wouldn't fight, but David did because he knew that Yahweh was stronger. I mean, the hero in this story, friends,

it's not David, it's God. Right? And the star of the show is not the one standing on the battlefield, but the One standing over in heaven.

In fact, David even acknowledges this. Look at how he talks to the giant. He says, "You come to me with a sword, spear and javelin." In other words, "you come with all these weapons. That's true, and you're tall and you're big and you're intimidating and you're loud. But that doesn't matter. I have something better than you and that's the name of the Lord God. That's enough. The battle is His. It doesn't belong to you, Goliath. You're not the one in control, calling the shots. He is." I mean, think about it. What did David do here? He threw a rock. He did something that Jews had done a thousand times before. He hurled a stone at someone's head, but the Lord caused it to fly in the right direction, and the Lord caused it to sail at the right speed, and the Lord caused it to turn in the right trajectory and knock him down. That's from the hand of God. There's only one person who could get credit for Israel's victory, and that is Him.

And the story shows you is not the size of a man that wins victories.; it's the size of a man's God. David had the bigger God, that's why he won. And it tells you it doesn't matter how small a person is, when he gets into a situation like that. The only thing that matters is that the One he's going to for help. And the reason I mentioned this is I think about situations that we struggle with today. We're not in combat like this against the enemies of God; we don't fight like they did back then. But we fight other things. At the end of our care group last week, someone asked us to pray for our young people because they said they couldn't imagine growing up in a world like this. With all the evil and sin and debauchery taking place. It's really got them worried. And I understand; I really get it. I really do. I mean, let's be honest, there are giant size problems facing the church today, right? The LGBTQ movement is ginormous; it's everywhere. You go to the Walmart, it's there on the on the crosswalk. You go into a coffee store, it's there in the window. You go into the schools, it's there in how they lay out the bathrooms and stuff like this. So is the sexual revolution here in Canada. So are things like drugs and alcohol and Wicca and the cults and things like that. The green movement and all the weird ideas that's coming from that. And it's also intimidating. But the truth is, and this is where the story of David comes into play, our God is bigger than all that. Amen? It's nothing in comparison to Him. When you look at all that and you wonder, "What can I do? I feel so helpless." Well, you can pray. And you can call out on His name. God is stronger than anything that green movement can come up with. The Lord is bigger than that, so it doesn't have to intimidate you.

In fact, I told you last week, this story, that one reason that you have to call out to God is that you live on this side of the Cross, which means you've experienced the greatest example of God's power ever seen in human history. And that was at the cross and the resurrection. The Bible says that after the Lord sent Jesus to the cross to die for our sins, He rose from the grave to show that the power of death has been defeated. He overcame something that was so much greater than Goliath. And that's the work of sin and Hell. Because He's bigger than that as well. He showed that the grave itself could not hold him down. So when you're tempted to be afraid, always turn to Him.

Next week, we're going to carry on our studies in the rest of Hebrews. And now that we've gotten past the Hall of Faith, we're going to go back to a regular verse by verse exposition of it. And we'll talk about the passage that says that they were stoned, they were sawed in two and went about in sheepskins, goat skins, and holes in the ground and all that. So please come back and join us for that; it should be really good. For now let's close in a word of prayer and ask the Lord to help us to take these lessons to heart.

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the story of David. And the wonderful things we've learned from this man of God, just in this one story; there's so many other things to talk about in his life. Father, we need to remember this because we're all tempted to be afraid today. Just like the Jewish army, when we see these terrible things, these larger than life seemingly things, standing in front of us, we all tremble. We feel helpless. What can I do? How can I stand up to that? But David reminds us that we can stand up to it in Your power.

Lord, I pray for our church. I pray for the church in Canada right now that it would restore a sense of power to it; we would stop being so measly and afraid. If You can do the things the Bible says You can do, You can handle the problems we have. That's nothing to You. So Lord, I pray that Your power will be demonstrated among us today and among the people of God.

Father and as we continue to glorify You this morning in the Lord's Supper, we do want to remember that time when our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified; and He paid for our sins and our transgressions were put upon Him and then He rose to defeat the power of all of this. Father one day, it reminds us that we will be resurrected as well. One day we will stand before You in glorified sinless perfect bodies. We look forward to that day Father. We long for that day. We want to see the heavenly country and the better place. May the communion time be a reminder of that, that we would put our thoughts on You, that Christ would be exalted in all these things, and we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen