

GIANT SLAYERS

1 Samuel 17:1-11 ESV

¹ Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle. And they were gathered at Socoh, which belongs to Judah, and encamped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. ² And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered, and encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in line of battle against the Philistines. ³ And the Philistines stood on the mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. ⁴ And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. ⁵ He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. ⁶ And he had bronze armor on his legs, and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. ⁷ The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. And his shield-bearer went before him. ⁸ He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not 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 be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us." ¹⁰ And 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.

REIMAGINE THE SCENE:

Ancient Israelites would've understood the giants to be mythic creatures of satanic origin.

- Occasionally in the Scriptures the term Rephaim gets associated with them
- Rephaim were literally the shades or the dead spirits of ancient warrior kings
- Their place is in the underworld.

When we come to this scene in [1 Samuel 17](#), a giant of any nature or size hasn't been encountered in battle for nearly 400 years—since the time of Joshua and Caleb conquering the land.

Joshua 11:21-22 ESV

GIANT SLAYERS

²¹ And Joshua came at that time and cut off the Anakim from the hill country, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua devoted them to destruction with their cities. ²² There was none of the Anakim left in the land of the people of Israel. Only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod did some remain.

Goliath comes out the ranks as their champion, calling out the Israelites to send a man down to him to fight.

- Goliath is about 9 and half feet tall and armored beyond the typical Philistine infantry of the day.
 - He's armed to the teeth
 - His weapons look as monstrous and mythic as he does
- He wants to engage in a duel of champions to determine the outcome.
 - Clearly, Saul and the armies of Israel are outmatched

Fear overtook Saul and his men

- Its as if a spawn of the underworld showed up to defy them and their God.
- Something that hasn't been seen in 400 years – truly what would have felt to be rumors and myths and legends of old was now before them and threatening their existence—wanting to enslave them.

The TIMING of this challenge is interesting:

- Saul is now an older king—he had been Israel's champion and had stood head and shoulders above his peers.
 - He's definitely past his prime and is no match for any champion, let alone this monster before him.
 - Saul has also been rejected by God for his disobedience – Samuel the prophet made this clear to him.
 - A troubling spirit has plagued Saul for some time and he was spiritually and psychologically tormented.
- The enemy reveals himself NOW at a moment when Israel was weak and unexpected.
 - Q: Why didn't these giants show themselves during the time of Samson or even Gideon?
 - Saul at this moment was a faithless king and likely had no capacity to lead God's people in and through this fight.

GIANT SLAYERS

BUT GOD,

- God doesn't abandon his people even though their king has betrayed him.
- God doesn't abandon his people to the schemes of the enemy.
- No, God had raised up an anointed one who would trust Him and deliver His people from this satanic scourge.
 - (in this David is truly a type [picture/foreshadow] of Christ)
 - (interestingly enough, Joshua was too before him—one who led Israel into victory & conquest)

1 Samuel 17:31-40 ESV

³¹ When the words that David spoke were heard, they repeated them before Saul, and he sent for him. ³² And David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." ³³ And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth." ³⁴ But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, ³⁵ I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him. ³⁶ Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied 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 will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!" ³⁸ Then Saul clothed David with his armor. He put a helmet of bronze on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail, ³⁹ and David strapped his sword over his armor. And he tried in vain to go, for he had not tested them. Then David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them." So David put them off. ⁴⁰ Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the brook and put them in his shepherd's pouch. His sling was in his hand, and he approached the Philistine.

GIANT SLAYERS

DAVID: THE GIANT SLAYER

David's life and faith had been prepared for this moment

- He had already fought and killed lions and bears
- He recognized that Yahweh had delivered him from the paws of those beasts
- He trusted that God would deliver him from the hand of the 'uncircumcised philistine' too
- He had the capacity to understand the fight for what it was.
 - He wasn't intimidated or cower in fear like everyone else.
 - He knew the scriptures... he likely knew the source of this giant.
 - He also knew Israel had defeated them before.
 - He also knew that God judged Israel for their cowardice in Moses' day.
 - In the end, David had FAITH in God

David clothed himself in humility and trust

- He rejected Saul's kingly armor (for he was not used to them)
 - Only the king and his son had that type of armor and weaponry in that day
- He chose to fight using what God had already equipped him with
- David chose his staff and sling.
 - He paused to pick up 5 stones from the brook and he approached the Philistine.

We know the rest of the story:

- Goliath taunts and mocks David and the God of Israel
- David returns the taunts, but makes known the fight is in God's hands
- David runs at Goliath and slings a stone right into Goliath's forehead
- David ran to the fallen giant and unsheathed his sword (the one meant for him) and cut off Goliath's head.
- The army of Israel rises up and the Philistines flee at David's victory
- So Israel was saved that day

Why did David pick up 5 stones?

- Scripture doesn't state why...
- But I don't think he doubted his aim

GIANT SLAYERS

- Rather, I think he was prepared for more—David somehow must've known
- Goliath had at least one brother (tradition says 3), but in all the scripture will describe 4 more encounters with giants.
- Giants that hadn't been seen or fought in 400 years suddenly come out in their attempts to destroy Israel

2 Samuel 21:15-22 ESV

¹⁵ There was war again between the Philistines and Israel, and David went down together with his servants, and they fought against the Philistines. And David grew weary. ¹⁶ And Ishbi-benob, one of the descendants of the giants, whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of bronze, and who was armed with a new sword, thought to kill David. ¹⁷ But Abishai the son of Zeruiah came to his aid and attacked the Philistine and killed him. Then David's men swore to him, "You shall no longer go out with us to battle, lest you quench the lamp of Israel." ¹⁸ After this there was again war with the Philistines at Gob. Then Sibbecai the Hushathite struck down Saph, who was one of the descendants of the giants. ¹⁹ And there was again war with the Philistines at Gob, and Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim, the Bethlehemite, struck down Goliath (LXX: Godolian—[1 CHRON 20](#): Lahmi, the brother of Goliath) the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. ²⁰ And there was again war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature, who had six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number, and he also was descended from the giants. ²¹ And when he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimei, David's brother, struck him down. ²² These four were descended from the giants in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

THE NEXT GENERATION OF GIANT SLAYERS

The remaining 4 giants are defeated by David's men

- Abishai saved David's life (he was getting old at this time) and killed the giant Ishbi-benob
- Sibbecai struck down the giant Saph
- Elhanan struck down the brother of Goliath—Godolian/Lahmi
- Jonathan struck down the 24 digit giant (unnamed)

GIANT SLAYERS

These four men were close to David

- Abishai and Jonathan are David's nephews (dynamic cousins)
- Sibbecai and Elhanan are both elite warriors, part of David's mighty men

These men fight giants like David rather than cower like Saul

- Why? The giants are still the same offspring of hell.
- Faith and victory BEGET faith and victory
- In other words:
 - Saul and his men hadn't encountered a giant – Israel hadn't in 400 years. They responded in terror.
 - David's men saw/heard David slay Goliath—that had to have been faith building.
 - When they encountered the giants, they knew it was possible, David had already done it

CONCLUSION & APPLICATION:

1: THE ENEMY DOESN'T FIGHT FAIR

- He deals in terror and intimidation
- He strikes when God's people are ill-prepared, unexpected, or weak.
- He devours when God's people are faithless (Saul)

2: GOD DOESN'T ABANDON HIS PEOPLE

- He raises up anointed and faith-filled people to lead in times of crisis
- He requires that his people live, walk, and fight by faith RATHER than their own cunning (Saul's armor)

3: FAITH BEGETS FAITH

- David could trust and overcome because he likely knew Joshua & Caleb's victory (testimony of the Word)

GIANT SLAYERS

- David's men could similarly find victory by trusting God and following David's example

4: WHAT ABOUT YOU?

- What giants – intimidating schemes and attacks of the enemy are threatening your world OR God's people today?
- How might God raise you up?
- How might God be preparing you with 'smaller beasts' before facing the giant?
- How might God be asking you to instill faith in others BY SHARING what God has already done in and through your life?