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Samuel (Rise of the King) - Lesson 25
The Battle Before the Battle (1 Samuel 17:1-30)

I. THE ENEMY'S CHALLENGE (1 Samuel 17:1-11)

A. A Strategic Battlefield (vv. 1-3)

Strategic battlefield

- Philistines – near Socoh in Judah
- Saul's army – in Valley of Elah
- Two armies occupied opposing hills
- The **VALLEY (1)** separated them

B. A Champion Built to Intimidate (vv. 4-7)

Champion from Gath

- Goliath came from Philistine city of Gath
- He was their chosen **CHAMPION (2)**
- Extraordinary height (9' 9")
- He looked to be an overwhelming opponent.

Armed for Battle

- Bronze helmet & scale armor
- Body armor = 125 lbs.
- Spearhead = 15 lbs.
- A shield-bearer gave additional protection

C. A Challenge with National Consequences (vv. 8-11)

One man represents many

- Goliath proposed **REPRESENTATIVE (3)** combat
- Each nation chooses one representative
- The outcome would determine which nation served the other
- Consequences were huge

Open act of Defiance

- Goliath publicly **DEFIED (4)** Israel
- His challenge demanded an answer
- He sought to humiliate Saul's army
- The conflict was becoming more than military

Army overcome by fear

- Saul & all Israel heard Goliath's challenge
- The army lost its **COURAGE (5)**
- Fear replaced readiness for battle
- No one answered Goliath's challenge

The king who looked the part

- Saul stood taller than all other Israelites
- His **APPEARANCE (6)** impressed people
- Now he's facing a larger opponent
- Outward stature could not supply courage

What they should remember

- God had delivered them from great enemies in the past
- His people were commanded not to **FEAR (7)**
- Victory ultimately belongs to God
- Israel needed to remember whom it served.

Supporting Scripture: Deuteronomy 20:1-4.

II. DAVID ARRIVES AT THE BATTLEFIELD (1 Samuel 17:12-19)

A. An Unlikely Man for an Unlikely Moment (vv. 12-15)

Jesse's Household

- Jesse lived in **BETHLEHEM (8)** of Judah
- He was elderly and had eight sons
- His three oldest sons followed Saul
- David was the youngest of the family

Between Palace & Pasture

- David had entered Saul's service
- He continued tending his father's sheep
- He moved between the palace and the **PASTURE (9)**
- His anointing had not ended his responsibilities

B. 40 Days of Intimidation (v. 16)

40 Days of Intimidation

- Goliath appeared morning and evening
- His challenge continued for 40 days
- Israel remained unable to answer
- The military **STALEMATE (10)** continued

C. Faithfulness in Ordinary Responsibilities (vv. 17-19)

A Father's Concern

- Jesse's three sons were away at war
- He sent provisions for the soldiers
- David was to check on their well-being
- Jesse wanted confirmation of their **SAFETY (11)**

Ordinary Assignment

- David was entrusted with a **SIMPLE (12)** task
- His assignment was to serve his family
- He was not sent to fight Goliath
- Obedience would bring him to the battlefield

III. FAITH SEES WHAT FEAR CANNOT (1 Samuel 17:20-27)

A. Obedience Brings David to the Front Lines (vv. 20-22)

Ready & Responsible

- David rose **EARLY (13)** to begin his journey
- He left the sheep with a caretaker
- He followed Jesse's instructions
- His responsibilities were not neglected

Ready & Responsible

- David arrives as Israel assembles for battle
- The Soldiers shouted their **WAR CRY (14)**
- Both armies formed their battle lines
- The confrontation remained unresolved

David Reaches His Brothers

- David left the supplies with the keeper
- He **RAN (15)** to the battle line
- He went to check on his brothers
- His father's assignment remained priority

B. The Same Challenge, a Different Response (vv. 23-24)

Same Words, Different ears

- Goliath comes forward once again
- He repeated his **CHALLENGE (16)**
- David heard the Philistine's words
- A different response was coming

Fear Sends Israel Running

- The soldiers saw Goliath
- They **RETREATED (17)** in his presence
- The fear remained overwhelming
- No one had answered the challenge

C. Two Perspectives on the Same Enemy (vv. 25-27)

The King's Reward

- Soldiers discussed Goliath's repeated challenge
- Saul offered great wealth to the victor
- Marriage to the king's **DAUGHTER (18)**
- Family exempt from taxes

Recognized Disgrace

- David asked about the promised reward
- He recognizes Israel's **DISGRACE (19)**
- Goliath's defiance troubled David
- The issue reached beyond just personal danger

Covenant Identity questioned

- David calls Goliath uncircumcised
- Circumcision marked Israel's covenant with God
- Goliath is **OUTSIDE (20)** of that identity
- David remembered whom Israel belonged to

Armies of the living God

- Goliath defied the armies of the Living God
- David recognized God's authority over Israel
- Israel's hope rested in the Lord
- Faith changed David's **PERSPECTIVE (21)**

IV. OPPOSITION FROM WITHIN (1 Samuel 17:28-30)

A. Misunderstood by His Own Brother (v. 28)

Unexpected accusation

- Eliab became **ANGRY (22)** with David
- He questioned David's **PRESENCE (23)**
- He belittled David's responsibilities
- He accused David of arrogance and evil motives

Who really knows the heart

- Samuel once judged Eliab by **APPEARANCE (24)**
- God declared that He sees the heart
- Eliab now claims to know David's heart
- Human judgment remains limited

B. Response Without Retreat (vv. 29-30)

David responds

- David questions the accusations
- He **DEFENDS (25)** his right to ask
- He refuses an extended argument
- His response is brief and direct

David Continues asking

- David turned to the other soldiers
- He continued **ASKING (26)** about the offer
- The soldiers repeated the same answer
- Eliab's criticism did not end the conversation

What We Learned

- Fear can overshadow God's faithfulness
- Ordinary **OBEDIENCE (27)** matters
- Faith sees circumstances through God's truth
- Criticism requires a wise response

What's Next (1 Samuel 17:31-58)

- David's words reach King Saul
- David recalls God's past deliverance
- David confronts Goliath in the Lord's name
- God gives Israel a remarkable victory