

Session 4 David and Goliath: Overcoming Giants (1 Sam. 17)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In this passage we see David as bold and courageous, pursuing and driving out God’s enemies. In David’s generation, the Philistines were one of the most advanced armies in the world because they were one of the first nations to use iron and, thus, to develop iron weapons. This gave them a great advantage in battle over Israel. Goliath, their champion, was unstoppable by human means.
- B. A national military crisis erupted against Israel that was beyond their military capabilities. The outcome would determine their future, as the slavery and destruction of Israel was at stake.
- C. This account of Goliath is often spiritually applicable to any attack against us that requires more than human ability for us to triumph. Only by God’s power would Israel be able to triumph.

II. THE CONFLICT WITH GOLIATH INTRODUCED (1 SAM. 17:1-11)

- A. The Philistines invaded Judah at Sochoh (17:1-3).

*¹The Philistines gathered their armies together to battle, and were gathered together at Sochoh...
²Saul and the men of Israel were gathered...in the Valley of Elah [14 miles SW of Jerusalem], and drew up in battle array against the Philistines. ³The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. (1 Sam. 17:1-3)*

- B. Goliath, the Philistine champion and giant, is described (17:4-7).

⁴A champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span [nearly 10 feet]. ⁵He had a bronze helmet...a coat of mail, and the weight...was five thousand shekels of bronze [125 pounds]. ⁶And he had...a bronze javelin ⁷...his iron spearhead weighed six hundred shekels [15 pounds]. (1 Sam. 17:4-7)

- 1. Goliath had the most advanced weapons of his day (a helmet, coat of mail, shield, sword, spear, and javelin with a wooden shaft as thick as a beam from a weaver’s large loom).
- 2. These giants were the sons of Anak (Num. 13:32-33). Joshua had killed them all, except for the giants in the cities around Gath. So 500 years later, David was still dealing with them.

²¹Joshua came and cut off the Anakim...²²None of the Anakim were left in the land of the children of Israel; they remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod. (Josh. 11:21-22)

- C. Goliath defied Israel, causing many to be overcome with fear, despair, and hopelessness (17:8-11). Goliath accused them, “Why have you even come to battle? You know you are going to lose.”

⁸He [Goliath] stood and cried out to the armies of Israel...“Why have you come out to line up for battle?... Choose a man...⁹If 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...”¹⁰And the Philistine said, “I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.”¹¹When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. (1 Sam. 17:8-11)

III. DAVID ACCEPTED GOLIATH'S CHALLENGE (1 SAM. 17:12-39)

- A. Jesse sent David to the Valley of Elah (17:12-23).

¹⁵David occasionally went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem. ¹⁶And the Philistine drew near and presented himself forty days, morning and evening. ¹⁷Then Jesse said to his son David, "Take now for your brothers an ephah [half a bushel] of this dried grain and these ten loaves, and run to your brothers at the camp [about 7 miles from Bethlehem]..." ²²And David...greeted his brothers. ²³Then as he talked with them...the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name...spoke according to the same words. So David heard them. (1 Sam. 17:12-23)

- B. God sent David so that he was in the right place at the right time to hear Goliath's challenge.

- C. David had been anointed by the prophet Samuel and worked in the king's court, yet he is described as running errands and tending sheep. He served the king one day and ran errands the next day.

²⁰So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, and took the things and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the camp...²²And David left his supplies in the hand of the supply keeper, ran to the army, and came and greeted his brothers. (1 Sam. 17:20-22)

1. David gained prominence, but also kept his servant heart, which was a practical expression of his intimacy with God.
2. David was faithful; he did not neglect his mundane responsibilities—he left the sheep with a keeper and the supplies in the right hands (17:20, 22). The Holy Spirit recorded David's integrity and faithfulness in menial tasks in the context of his national victory.
3. From the king's court, David returned to the sheepfold—his exalted position did not ruin him for humble service!

- D. The army of Israel saw *only* the giant; therefore they were filled with fear (17:24-25). The picture here is of people who are accustomed to operating in the arm of the flesh and, thus, are terrified in the day of battle, because they have no experience with spiritual weapons of warfare. Saul had courage in his earlier days (1 Sam. 11:5-11; 14:47), when he was operating in the Spirit.

²⁴And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were dreadfully afraid. ²⁵So the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel; and it shall be that the man who kills him the king will enrich with great riches, will give him his daughter, and give his father's house exemption from taxes." (1 Sam. 17:24-25)

1. Fear will be one of the main issues dominating the human race in the end times (Lk. 21:26).
²⁶Men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of things which are coming... (Lk. 21:26)
2. The accuser's voice was heard through Goliath. Satan accuses us night and day (Rev. 12:10).
¹⁰...for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. (Rev. 12:10)

- E. David was rebuked by his oldest brother, Eliab, who taunted him for only being over a “few sheep” (17:26-30).

²⁶David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, “What shall 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 defy the armies of the living God?”...²⁸Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab’s anger was aroused against David, and he said, “Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.”²⁹And David said, “What have I done now? Is there not a cause?” (1 Sam. 17:26-29)

1. There will always be jealous people and leaders—maybe even be in your family—who insult those who boldly stand against the enemies of Lord. Samuel thought to anoint Eliab, yet the Lord said “No!” Eliab, moved by jealousy, now concluded that David was proud.
2. Jesse had eight sons (16:10, 11); three of them joined Saul’s army (17:13), and five were still at home in Bethlehem, with David being the youngest son (17:14).

- F. ***Leadership lesson:*** Everyone in leadership must at times endure insults and accusations, sometimes even from family members and the experienced “soldiers” of the day (17:28).

- G. David’s answer was, “*Is there not a cause that is worthy of extravagant commitment to God?*” He was asking if there was something worth paying a price for to live differently in his generation.

- H. David asked Saul for permission to fight Goliath (17:31-37).

³²David said to Saul, “Let no man’s heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.”³³And Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth...”³⁴David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep his father’s sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock,³⁵ I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth...I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it.³⁶Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.”...³⁷[the Lord] will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” Saul said to David, “Go, and the LORD be with you!” (1 Sam. 17:31-37)

1. David was mocked by Eliab (17:28), Saul (17:33), and, later, Goliath (v. 42-44). However, David lived by God’s view of him. Saul scoffed at the thought of a young person standing against the mightiest warrior that Israel had ever faced. In his opinion, David was unqualified.
2. The most important question in a crisis is, “*What does God say about the crisis or the giant?*” David saw Goliath through God’s eyes as one who defied the living God. David did not see Goliath as a viable threat to God’s purpose.
3. David answered Saul from his secret history in God—what he had experienced in his private life in God. David experienced God’s power in his mundane job among the sheep. God gives private victories over the “lion and bear” before He releases national victories.
4. I think Saul remembered feeling God’s presence when David sang over his oppression.

- I. David refused Saul's armor. We do not want to walk in another person's calling (17:38-39).
³⁸So Saul clothed David with his armor...³⁹David...tried to walk, for he had not tested them. And David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them." So David took them off. (1 Sam. 17:38-39)
1. David had not tested Saul's armor—he had no experience with Saul's equipment. We must not go to war against the enemy relying on another's experience and calling. David took Saul's armor off and went forth in what had been proven in his own history in God.
 2. Saul put his armor on David, thinking that David needed more of what he himself relied on. Saul's armor was not getting the job done, so why would it be adequate for David? Do not go to war with "Saul's armor"; it is made of the same material as the giant's armor.
 3. Cultivating God's presence in our life today is essential to standing against unexpected giants tomorrow.
 4. The prayer closet is a key aspect of the Holy Spirit's seminary. The prayer room is away from the crowds, like David in the fields of Bethlehem where he killed the lion and bear (17:34).
 5. Professional titles, achievements, and degrees do not move angels and demons. Adopting a lifestyle of prayer with fasting is a statement of relying on God's strength.
¹⁵The evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" (Acts 19:15)

IV. DAVID FOUGHT GOLIATH (1 SAM. 17:40-58)

- A. David came to Goliath in the name of the Lord, knowing that the battle was the Lord's (17:40-47).
⁴⁰And he [David] chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag... and his sling was in his hand...⁴²And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was only a youth...⁴³So the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?...⁴⁴I will give your flesh to the birds of the air...!"⁴⁵Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts...whom you have defied.⁴⁶This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will...take your head from you...that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.⁴⁷Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands." (1 Sam. 17:40-47)
1. Goliath trusted in his military might (17:43), disdainingly David, and saying, "Am I a dog that you come against me with a stick?" You come as a kid with a slingshot? Goliath was insulted, because David had no resources, no money, no titles, no position, just a history in God.
 2. David came in the name of the Lord, by invoking the power of God. The stone he slung at Goliath was guided by God's invisible hands.

3. First David spoke a prophetic decree to the enemy based on God's word to him.
4. Previously, Saul sought to talk David out of this battle (17:33). Saul agreed with Goliath's view of David, seeing David as unable to prevail because he was an unqualified youth.
5. David had victories that Saul did not know of. Private victory precedes public victory. After we slay the lion and the bear in private, we will be bolder in public.
6. David understood that the Lord does not save with a sword, for the battle is the Lord's. Goliath came to David with a sword (human power), but David came in the Lord's name.

⁶“Not by [human] might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the LORD. (Zech. 4:6)

³For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds. (2 Cor. 10:3-4)

- B. David refused to settle down and accept the status quo. The Lord is calling young Davids to get prepared, take a stand, live differently, and believe for things to be different.
- C. The Lord is looking for a few good men and women who will boldly take their stand for Him.
- D. David killed Goliath, who fell on his face to the earth (17:48-54).

⁴⁸...David hurried and ran...to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth...⁵¹Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword...and killed him, and cut off his head with it. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. ⁵²Now the men of Israel and Judah arose...and pursued the Philistines as far as...the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road... even as far as Gath and Ekron...⁵⁴And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem. (1 Sam. 17:48-54)

- E. Saul inquired about David's family lineage (17:55-58). This question might have been in light of the promise Saul made that the man who killed Goliath could marry Saul's daughter (17:25).

⁵⁵When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, “Abner, whose son is this youth?” And Abner said, “As your soul lives, O king, I do not know.”⁵⁶So the king said, “Inquire whose son this young man is.”⁵⁷Then, as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. ⁵⁸And Saul said to him, “Whose son are you, young man?” So David answered, “I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.” (1 Sam. 17:55-58)

1. Saul did not know who David's parents were. David had served in the royal court as Saul's armorbearer and court musician (16:18), but David here seems to be a stranger to Saul.
2. Saul probably never asked about David's testimony or family life since he had a distressed spirit, which possibly left him with a bad memory and lack of focus through being tormented (16:15-23).

- F. Four categories of people in the conflict (from Reinhard Bonnke):
1. Ex-anointed professional—Saul (a picture of leaders who have lost the fire of the Spirit)
 2. Un-anointed professionals—Saul’s army (a picture of ministries without power)
 3. Anti-anointed—Goliath (a picture of the enemies of God’s people and purposes)
 4. Anointed non-professional—David (a picture of God’s anointed vessels)

V. THE PROPHETIC CALL TODAY TO PREPARE GOD’S DAVIDS

- A. This account of Goliath is a prophetic picture of the end-time giant—the Antichrist. In the end-time crisis, the Antichrist’s coalition of nations will wage war against Israel and the Body of Christ. God’s people will use seemingly inferior weapons against the “strongest powers” on earth.

²*For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem. (Zech. 14:2)*

⁸*“In that day, the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David...⁹It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.” (Zech. 12:8-9)*

²*“I will also gather all nations...and I will enter into judgment with them there.” (Joel 3:2)*

- B. The LORD will defend His people through those who will use “weak weapons” like David’s.

¹⁵*The LORD of hosts will defend them [Jerusalem]; they shall...subdue with slingstones. (Zech. 9:15)*

- C. God will raise up His young Davids against the Antichrist for the greatest showdown in history. Goliath said that he would feed David to the birds (17:44); David said it right back to him (17:46). God will feed the Antichrist’s armies to the birds of the air at the Armageddon campaign.

¹⁷*Then I saw an angel...saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,¹⁸ that you may eat the flesh of kings... and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.”¹⁹*I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse. (Rev. 19:17-19)**

- D. The defiance of the nations against the God of Israel throughout history will culminate in the end times (Ps. 2:1-3). God will defeat the nations who dare to oppose Him (Ps. 2:4-5).

²*The kings of the earth set themselves...against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,
³*“Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us.”⁴He who sits in the heavens shall laugh...⁵Then He shall speak to them in His wrath. (Ps. 2:2-5)**