

Probably one of the most familiar stories in the Bible is the one of David and Goliath. It is a story of a shepherd's bravery and trust in God. It is a story about a young man being prepared to step up and assume responsibilities, and as we consider this story, let us first consider the BATTLE SCENE. *1 Samuel 17:1-3 Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, (pronounced Soko) which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, (pronounced A-z-ka) in Ephesdammim (pronounced E-fes dam-meem). (2) And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines. (3) And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and there was a valley between them.*

The land of Israel was approachable from the Mediterranean Sea from any of through six different valleys. The Philistines already controlled Shochoh (Soko) and Azekah (A-z-ka) were coming up the valley of Elah. If they got much farther up the valley, they could have access to the ridge route that led to the hill country which threatened Bethlehem, Hebron and Saul's capital city of Gibeah. The situation was desperate for Saul's army.

Try to envision in your mind two mountains with a valley running between them and on the one mountain you have the Israelites and on the other you have the Philistines — both come to battle. The word "valley" in v 2 is different than the word used in v3. Valley in v2 means a broad, wide flat area while the word in v 3 denotes a narrower, more rugged area like a gorge. The Philistines had been the enemy to Israel for many years and now it was time for battle. They had a giant of a man in their camp by the name of Goliath that was their representative in single combat.

GOLIATH'S DESCRIPTION AND CHALLENGE IS SEEN IN 1 SAMUEL 17:4-11. *1 Samuel 17:4-7 And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.* While the Israelites and the Philistines were sizing each other up, the "champion" warrior came out of the

Philistine camp whose height was “six cubits and a span,” which is about 9 1/2 feet tall. Compare this to the size of a standard door today which is 6 1/2 high.

(5) And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. Goliath was covered with the best armor of the day. His armor weighed 148 pounds.

(6) And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. (7) And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him. Goliath had a shield which was carried by one of the Philistines, and his spear head weighed about 17 pounds.

GOLIATH'S CHALLENGE. *1 Samuel 17:8-11 And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.* In all his fierceness he stood before the Israelites taunting them. *(9) If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us.* Goliath wanted them to send out their champion to fight — and this would decide the battle. *(10) And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together. (11) When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.* When the Israelites heard this, they showed themselves to be cowards; they were “*greatly afraid.*” It is this setting that David arrives on the scene.

David the youngest son of Jesse went to the camp of the Israelites to carry food to his brothers. As David came near and greeted his brothers, Goliath comes forth and taunts the Israelites, as he had been doing for the last 40 days and each time Israel trembled in fear. *1 Samuel 17:26 And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?* The people tell David that Saul has offered his daughter in marriage and wealth to anyone who can defeat Goliath. While being chastised by his brother, David

said in v29 ... *Is there not a cause?* So David volunteers to fight Goliath. In vs 36-37 David convinces King Saul that he could defeat the giant because God had delivered him out of the grips of a lion and a bear and thus he would deliver him out of the hand of this Philistine. David says that Goliath will end up like this lion and bear because he has *“defied the armies of the living God.”*

In vs 38-40 we find David being armed for the fight as King Saul puts his best armor on David, but David was unaccustomed to the armor and removed it. Instead of the armor, David took his staff, a sling shot, and five smooth stones he had gathered from the brook in the Valley of Elah.

DAVID BATTLES GOLIATH (1 SAM. 17:41-54). David goes to meet Goliath. Notice the reaction when Goliath saw David. *1 Samuel 17:43-44 And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. (44) And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.* After the hurling of insults by Goliath, notice the response by David and how he put his trust in God for victory and deliverance. *1 Samuel 17:45-47 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. (46) This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. (47) And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.*

After David's claim, v 48 says he ran toward Goliath. *1 Samuel 17:48-49 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. (49) And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his*

forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.
David was victorious!

LESSONS FOR US. Let us now look back at this great event in Hebrews history and learn a few valuable lessons that will help us to be more faithful today.

DAVID FOUGHT FOR THE LORD. David has seen how all of Israel was afraid to confront Goliath who had “defied the armies of God” and needed to be taken down. David did what needed to be done to defend the Lord. He “RAN” to the fight (v48). Now today we have opportunities to fight for the Lord.

Fighting for the Lord was not always done in a physical battle. There are many great men and women in the Bible who were willing to fight for the Lord in other ways. Noah fought for the Lord by preaching righteousness in an unrighteous world (Gen. 6-7). Joseph stood his ground for the Lord against Potifer’s wife when he said, “***How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God***” (Gen. 39:9). Elijah fought for the Lord to the point that Ahab/Jezebel wanted to kill him (1 Kings. 17-19). John the Baptizer literally lost his head for fighting for truth/morality (Matthew 14). Peter & John in Acts 4-5 fought for the Lord even though the Sanhedrin warned them not to. Paul fought for the Lord to the point that he was stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19)

We need to fight for the Lord just like these great men of the past have done. ***Jude 3 ... it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*** Paul wrote to Timothy to “***Fight the good fight of faith***” (1 Tim. 6:12) and concluded his second letter to Timothy that he himself had fought a good fight and kept the faith (2 Timothy 4:7).

These great men and women of the faith went through great hardships in fighting for the Lord; they were stoned, tortured, imprisoned, and even suffered death. Many of them had not received the promises and revelation that we have; so, how much more then should we be fighting for the Lord? Let us be like David who fought for the Lord, even when no one else would.

DAVID PUT HIS TRUST IN THE LORD. Lack of trust in God was the very reason that all of Saul's army was afraid to meet Goliath in battle. You see this throughout the study of 1 Samuel. David, though, trusted in God and was willing to face an awesome task. David had trusted in the Lord before and was not let down. Without trust in God, David would have been just like any other Israelite, but his trust in God is clearly seen in 1 Samuel 17:47. *And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.*

Let me suggest that we need this same type of trust today! We need this type of trust in times of adversity. So many times we put our trust in self, others, or wealth and to a degree that might be alright, but let us understand that eventually your riches and trust in others will fail you. Understand too that having the self-confidence in self to overcome adversity will at times fall short. Our ultimate trust needs to be in the Lord who promises to never leave or forsake us (Heb 13:5)

The Israelites were putting trust in themselves and therefore were afraid. Man will let us down but God will not. Notice what David wrote some years later. *Psalms 20:6-8 Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand. (7) Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. (8) They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.* Let us have David's attitude

DAVID WENT INTO BATTLE PREPARED. *1 Samuel 17:40 And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.* We know that David trusted in God, but we still see David collecting five stones instead of one — David wanted to make sure he was prepared. God was David's armor, but David still had to do his part in preparing himself. God always expects us to do our part. We are in a battle today with an enemy mightier than Goliath. We are in a spiritual battle with Satan and we must prepare ourselves. We like David need to put on the whole armor of God that is described for us in Eph. 6:13-17. David picked up five smooth stones to be used in his defense; we pick up nuggets for our defense

through study and applying God's word to our lives. ***1 Timothy 4:13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*** Later in his second letter to Timothy Paul would emphasize this matter again. ***2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.***

Let me end with a question for you to consider. Are you ready to fight the Goliaths of our day?

1. The Goliaths of sin?
2. The Goliaths of false doctrine?
3. The Goliaths of apathy?

Will we be victorious like David? David did what he needed to do to insure victory. Perhaps there are some things you need to do to insure spiritual victory.

Invitation