

In Lesson 1, the Israelites chose Saul as king, and did they ever get what they asked for! Saul ended up being a failure as the leader of Israel. God instructed Samuel to stop grieving over Saul, because God would provide a king that He saw best for His people. When Samuel went to Bethlehem to anoint the next king, seven of Jesse's sons passed by, all of whom God gave a divine "thumb's down", despite their awesome outward appearance.

Through this, God taught Samuel (and us) to not see as people see, but to see as He sees. We are to look at the internal person of the heart. The man after God's heart in this case was David, a young man between the ages of 10–16. Over the next undisclosed period of time, David went back to his sheep, where he would learn more of the Lord, and become a witness for the Lord to others. This is evident in one of the descriptions that Saul's servant gave of him.

As the Holy Spirit filled David, the Spirit departed from Saul and a tormenting spirit of some kind afflicted him. Yet David was ironically the one chosen to minister in music to Saul, and bring comfort in his affliction, though he knew he would one day take the place of this man. Let's pick up the story some time later and see what has transpired, and how David would be triumphant and exalted in the sight of Israel.

DAY 1

A Fearful Proposal 1 SAMUEL 17:1–11

Please Read 1 Samuel 17:1–11 and answer the following questions

[1] Saul had previously beaten back the Philistines, but 1 Samuel 14:52 tells us that there was fierce war between Israel and the Philistines all his days. The Philistines had again regrouped, invading Sochoh (spelled "Socoh" or "Soco" in some other versions), a part of Judah. This general area was about 15–17 miles west/north west of Bethlehem.¹

What happened when the two armies faced each other, and what are some of the details described (vv. 4–7)?

Note: "Champion" is used only here in the Old Testament, and refers to an intermediary, middleman, or representative; this "representative" was a mere six cubits and a span. This means he was nine feet nine inches tall!²

[2] This champion, Goliath (Goliath means "exile"³), was quite a sight with awesome weaponry. What was his fearful proposal to the Israelites (vv. 8–10)?

[3] What was the reaction of the Israelites and their king (v. 11)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] The enemy always tries to encroach on the territory that God gives us, offering a fearful challenge to us, defying and trying to expose us as weak and failing.⁴ It may seem impressive and impossible to conquer, and like the Israelites, our response may be being dismayed, greatly afraid, crushed, demoralized, and panicking.⁵

What is true, despite how things may appear to us externally (1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 John 4:4)?

[2] David and Goliath are both types (symbols) in this chapter, but we must not view this as just a Sunday school story to teach us a lesson, or a mythological tale. These were real, historical events, accurately described for us in amazing detail. The point of this story is, as Robert Bergen points out, "But the biblical narrative is not primarily a story about human courage and effort; it is about the awesome power of a life built around bold faith in the Lord."⁶ Goliath here serves as a type of the fleshly nature in its full, brutal ugliness. His fearful proposal would make the Israelites servants of the Philistines, just as our fleshly nature seeks to get us to compromise, and become its slave!

What did Paul write concerning dealing with this conflict with our fleshly nature?

Romans 6:6, 11–13

1 Corinthians 9:27

Daily Life Point: We all have a Goliath in our lives, an area of our fleshly nature that looms large from time to time and tries to demoralize and tear us down. As Alan Redpath well said, "You will find Satan defying the people of God in all these things which are so alluring and tremendously powerful."⁷

What Goliath looms large in your own life? What have the passages today spoken to you about that seemingly impossible obstacle in your own life? Record some thoughts about this to share and pray through with your

group. This week, we will seek together to see our Goliaths fall and Christ be glorified in and through our lives. Don't be afraid to share with and pray for one another openly and honestly.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Please make every effort to commit this and the rest of this year's verses to memory. Review the passage several times throughout each day, and by the end of the week, you should have it memorized.

Then 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, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied." (1 Samuel 17:45 NKJV)

DAY 2

A Philistine Problem **1 SAMUEL 17:12-27**

Please Read 1 Samuel 17:12-27 and answer the following questions

[1] David is once again introduced to us. What are some of the things that had been taking place with David and his family during this time period (vv. 13-16)? On what divinely appointed errand, though Jesse was probably oblivious to it, was David sent (vv. 17-18)?

[2] David was faithful to carry out his obligation, but then found out what had been going on with the war. What happened as David spoke with the brothers (vv. 23-25)?

Note: The New Living Translation says, "they began to run away in fright."

[3] David was evidently under age twenty, not old enough yet to serve in the army of Israel.⁹ Yet what was his brave response to this, especially in comparison to the cowardice of the rest of the army (v. 26)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] David was faithful to carry out his duties. When Saul did not need his services, David would return to take care of the family business, and also took extra steps to make sure it was cared for when he left again. One of the greatest witnesses we can have in our daily lives, work, and dealings is being faithful during the humdrum, everyday things through which we go. As F.B. Meyer well said, "What we are in solitude, we shall be in public. Do not for a moment suppose that the stimulus of a great occasion will endow you with a heroism of which you have shown no trace in secret hours."¹⁰

How did Paul encourage us to serve at all times in whatever we do (Ephesians 6:5–8; Colossians 3:22–24)?

[2] David alone seemed to take the right view of this enemy of God. He saw past the Philistine problem to the originator of it, as it was a spiritual battle. The Israelites viewed Goliath as "this man", but David viewed him as "an uncircumcised Philistine" who reproached and defied God.¹¹ Satan does this in our own battles with our "Goliaths", trying to get our perspective off of the spiritual nature of the problems at hand and onto the physical, the impossibility of conquering it, whatever he can use to distract us from seeing things as God sees them.

How did Jesus allude to the spiritual nature behind many of the conflicts we will face in our lives (John 15:18–22)?

What did Paul later warn us to be ever aware of (2 Corinthians 10:3–5, 7)?

Daily Life Point: Have you been looking at your Goliath with the wrong end of the telescope? Perhaps you too have seen the problem areas in your life magnified greatly, while missing the importance of the spiritual battle that is at the heart of the matter. Doing that will allow the external and physical aspects of our enemy to shrink in size, as we see that it is really Satan behind it all, attacking Christ in us, trying to make us feel reproached,

shamed, despised, and disgraced.¹²

What are some things that you can do to change this outlook in your own life, so you will see, as Charles Swindoll so well put it, that your Goliath is really the dwarf, and David (a parallel of Christ in you) is really the giant?¹³

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a _____, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the _____ of the Lord of hosts, the God of the _____ of Israel, whom you have _____." (1 Samuel 17:45 NKJV)

DAY 3

A Fearless Proposal **1 SAMUEL 17:28-39**

Please Read 1 Samuel 17:28-39 and answer the following questions

[1] What was the response of David's brother to his brave statement, and how did David handle this (vv. 28-30)?

Note: The Hebrew word for "anger" literally means the flaring of the nostrils in an emotional outburst.¹⁴

[2] What was David's fearless proposal, how did Saul react to this, and how did David respond to this (vv. 31-36)?

Note: "Youth" in Hebrew applied to anyone through adolescence;¹⁵ we must not think of David as some small boy

at this point, but as a late teenager.

[3] Saul reluctantly agreed to the proposal, but under what conditions, and how did this turn out (vv. 38–39)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] Don't expect everyone to stand up and cheer when you stand up for the Lord. Even David's "kingly" appearing brother showed his true colors in snubbing and trying to discourage him. Like David, we need to press on in confidence in the Lord and His calling in our lives when others oppose.

Nehemiah faced many people who attempted to discourage his work to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. How did he handle such things?

Nehemiah 4:9, 14–17

Nehemiah 6:9, 11, 15–16

[2] David was able to offer this fearless proposal by faith, yet he had learned by experience that God would do great things through us as we follow and trust Him.

The Goliaths of our lives also will become small in our sight as we stand by faith in the Lord, and have His strength. What are some things you read about the strength we can draw from the Lord in these passages, and how do they encourage you to trust Him more?

Psalms 73:25–26

Isaiah 40:28–31

Philippians 4:13

Daily Life Point: David refused to face Goliath in Saul's armor. In the Old Testament, wearing another person's clothes was often symbolic of doing something in that person's name and on their behalf. Perhaps this is symbolic of David wanting to walk in God's power, not Saul's.¹⁶

Trying to live on the shirttails of another person's spirituality also won't work; we must individually stand before the Lord in the power of the Spirit. "Too many people are trying to use a sword when a sling shot is really more their size."¹⁷

From what you have read today, what are some things you can do to better trust in the Lord's strength, regardless of how others respond to you? Record some thoughts here to share with your group.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a _____, with a spear, and with a _____. But I come to you in the _____ of the LORD of _____, the God of the _____ of Israel, whom you have _____."
(1 Samuel 17:45 NKJV)

DAY 4

A Philistine Provoked
1 SAMUEL 17:40-47

Please read 1 samuel 17:40-47 and answer the following questions

[1] What weaponry did David take with him (vv. 40-41)?

Note: The typical stone used in a slingshot of those days was about the size of a tennis ball.¹⁸ As J. Vernon McGee well pointed out, David did not take four extra stones to have extra weaponry, but because, as 2 Samuel 21:22 says, Goliath had four sons!¹⁹

[2] What was Goliath's reaction to David coming toward him (vv. 42–44)?

[3] What was David's awesome response to Goliath's intimidating words (vv. 45–47)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] What an incredible stance David took to provoke this enemy of God! He came to him, not in military armor and weapons, but in the name of the Lord whom he had defied. The result for all who witnessed the battle that day was that Goliath was dead and that the God of Israel was glorified, and that He alone is the one who brings spiritual victory. David's greatest resource was standing in the name of the Lord and the power of His might, which we too can do as we face the Goliaths in our lives.

Read Ephesians 6:10–18, and record some facts about the spiritual weaponry we have at our disposal in standing against the enemy.

[2] What are some thoughts that the following passages add about standing in the name and power of the Lord, and seeing Him bring about the victory?

Psalm 46:10

Hosea 1:7

Romans 8:31–32, 37–39

Daily Life Point: As we read earlier this week, David didn't suddenly become super endowed to carry out this struggle against Goliath; it was part of a process of growth that God took him through, and actually was at the time of training and trial of his faith that David developed the ability to defeat him.

Ponder the following statement made by F.B. Meyer, and then write out some thoughts of how you can seek God and better take on the full armor He has given you, day by day, and step by step: "Let us live alone with God. The weakest man who knows God is strong to do exploits. All the power of God awaits the disposal of our faith."²⁰

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a _____, with a _____, and with a _____. But I come to you in the _____ of the _____ of _____, the God of the _____ of Israel, whom you have _____."
(1 Samuel 17:45 NKJV)

DAY 5

A Famous Prevailing
1 SAMUEL 17:48-58

Please Read 1 Samuel 17:48-58 and answer the following questions

[1] The battle began and was over quickly. What amazing things did you read about David's actions in verses 48-51?

[2] How was the victory complete after David took his steps of faith (vv. 52-54)?

Note: Many people are bothered by why Saul didn't remember David at this point, but actually it was David's father that Saul didn't recall. As we saw in our first study, Saul did send messengers to get David from his father. Perhaps he merely forgot his name, and Abner was not even present at the earlier point. It is possible that verses 55–58 may actually have been originally tied in with the events of chapter 16. We don't know for sure why this is recorded in such a manner.²¹

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] David ran to the battle! We must not delay to come against the enemy in our lives. We must run by faith and let the enemy's seeming strengths be turned against him, like David did. Read the following passages, and record what they speak to you about running the race victoriously.

1 Corinthians 15:57–58

2 Timothy 2:1–6

Hebrews 12:1–3

[2] David again serves as a type or symbol of Jesus Christ. Just like Jesus, David rose up to the true battle, dealing with the real enemy behind the scenes, and just as the Israelites shared in and could be victorious because of David taking down Goliath, we too share in Christ's victory on the cross and His resurrection power.²²

What are some important truths Paul recorded in Romans 8:1–8 about Christ's victory for us, and our responsibility to walk in it?

Daily Life Point: What will it take to see your Goliath go down for the count and not get up again? We have seen that Christ through the cross has already won the victory for us. Our responsibility is to walk in the Spirit, not in the things that will lead our Goliath to rear his ugly head again with a stone sticking out of it. His head has to come off! Of course, we are not perfect, and will fail from time to time.

What are some things that spoke to you of the victory Christ won for you, and what you need to do in view of it? Record some thoughts here and pray through them with your group.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Write out this week's passage from memory. Give it a try, and then review the passage throughout the day.

I Samuel 17:45

DAY 6

Pursuing God's Heart

[1] We have learned in this chapter about experiencing and walking in victory over our flesh. Sadly, most Christians just cower in fear and dismay when their Goliath arises, when they have all the resources of God at their disposal! As Alan Redpath so well said, "So many Christians believe in the God of history and the God of prophecy; we believe all the great things He did in Wesley's day and in Moody's day. We believe in the great things He is going to do when He comes again. But how few of His people really believe that He is the God of today, that He is a present, living power in our hearts!"²³

What are you going to do to be different, and to trust God to work greatly and victoriously in your life, and take that Goliath down?

[2] God can certainly use some unusual circumstances, people, and events in our lives to accomplish His purposes for us, just as He did with David in an unexpected way. Obviously, David didn't wake up in the morning and think, "Well, today I think I'll single-handedly defeat the biggest opponent our nation ever faced and greatly become propelled to a place of prominence in the land." No, he simply made himself available to God for His service, and was prepared for this time of opportunity.²⁴

Why don't you write out a prayer of commitment here to be the type of person God can use in His perfect timing and His perfect way? Please share what you wrote with your group, and together commit it to the Lord.

[3] As Gene Getz pointed out, one of our greatest concerns should be upholding God's reputation and His glory in and through our lives.²⁵ He points out that we are representatives of Christ on this earth, and that all we do should be done to represent and bring honor to God's name, on which we stand.

How would you rate your own example to those around you in the following areas?

Home and Family:

Work/School/Career:

Neighbors:

Friends and Relatives:

Ministry or Service:

[4] Are there any other thoughts you'd like to share or anything else you learned this week that others would benefit from? If so, please record it here to share with your group.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Write out this week's passage from memory. Give it a try, and then review the passage throughout the day.

I Samuel 17:45**PARTING THOUGHTS**

There really is no specific psalm that addresses David's victory over Goliath. However, Psalm 9 records David's victory over enemies and has some very similar elements. While we as Christians are more likely to cry for mercy than judgment, as many of David's psalms do, we must remember that God is of infinite purity, and used David in this sense to carry out His judgment upon the Philistines and Goliath.²⁶ Sadly, as James Boice pointed out, many believers fail to take time to praise God for executing His judgment and bringing great victory over our enemies, spending more time complaining rather than worshipping Him for the victories He has won for us!²⁷

As C.H. Spurgeon well said of this Psalm:

God's presence is evermore sufficient to work the defeat of our most furious foes, and their ruin is so complete when the Lord takes them in hand, that even flight cannot save them, they fall to rise no more when he pursues them. We must be careful, like David, to give all the glory to him whose presence gives the victory. If we have here the exultings of our conquering Captain, let us make the triumphs of the Redeemer the triumphs of the redeemed, and rejoice with him at the total discomfiture of all his foes.²⁸

Psalms 9

To the Chief Musician. To the tune of "Death of the Son." A Psalm of David.

I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works.
 I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praises to Your name, O Most High.
 When my enemies turn back, they shall fall and perish at Your presence.
 For You have maintained my right and my cause;
 You sat on the throne judging in righteousness.
 You have rebuked the nations, You have destroyed the wicked;
 You have blotted out their name forever and ever.
 O enemy, destructions are finished forever! And you have destroyed cities;
 Even their memory has perished. But the Lord shall endure forever;

He has prepared His throne for judgment. He shall judge the world in righteousness,
And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.
The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.
And those who know Your name will put their trust in You;
For You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You.
Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion! Declare His deeds among the people.
When He avenges blood, He remembers them; He does not forget the cry of the humble.
Have mercy on me, O Lord! Consider my trouble from those who hate me,
You who lift me up from the gates of death, that I may tell of all Your praise
In the gates of the daughter of Zion. I will rejoice in Your salvation.
The nations have sunk down in the pit which they made;
In the net which they hid, their own foot is caught.
The Lord is known by the judgment He executes;
The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Meditation. Selah
The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.
For the needy shall not always be forgotten;
The expectation of the poor shall not perish forever.
Arise, O Lord, Do not let man prevail; Let the nations be judged in Your sight.
Put them in fear, O Lord, that the nations may know themselves to be but men. Selah

NOTES

- 1 John MacArthur, ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Word, 1997), p. 402.
- 2 Ronald F. Youngblood, 1, 2 Samuel in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, F.E. Gaebelin, ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1992), p. 695.
- 3 *Biblical Cyclopedia* in *The Open Bible* (Nashville: Nelson, 1985), p. 146.
- 4 James Strong, *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Hebrew Bible with their Renderings in the Authorized English Version* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1890), p. 44.
- 5 *The Complete Word Study Old Testament* (Chattanooga, Tenn.: AMG, 1994), p. 2319.
- 6 Robert D. Bergen, 1, 2 Samuel in *The New American Commentary*, E. Ray Clendon, ed., vol. 7 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), p. 187.
- 7 Alan Redpath, *The Making of a Man of God* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1962), p. 23.
- 9 Bergen, 1, 2 Samuel, p. 188.
- 10 F.B. Meyer, *The Life of David* (Lynwood, Wis.: Emerald Books, 1995), p. 36.
- 11 Youngblood, 1,2 Samuel, p. 697.
- 12 *The Complete Word Study*, pp. 2318-2319.
- 13 Charles R. Swindoll, *David, A Man of Passion and Destiny* (Dallas: Word, 1997), p. 47.
- 14 *The Complete Word Study*, p. 2302.
- 15 Strong, *A Concise Dictionary*, p. 79.
- 16 Mary J. Evans, 1 and 2 Samuel, R.L. Hubbard and R.K. Johnston, eds., vol. 6 (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2000), p. 84.
- 17 J. Vernon McGee, 1 and 2 Samuel (Pasadena, Calif.: Thru the Bible, 1976), p. 96.
- 18 Bergen, 1, 2 Samuel, p. 194.
- 19 McGee, 1 and 2 Samuel, p. 97.
- 20 Meyer, *The Life of David*, p. 44.
- 21 For those wishing to examine this further, please see Walter C. Kaiser et al., *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Downer's Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1996), pp. 213-214.
- 22 Alan Redpath, *The Making of a Man of God*, pp. 24, 26.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- 24 Warren W. Wiersbe, *With the Word Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Nelson, 1993), p. 361.
- 25 Gene A. Getz, *David, Serving God Faithfully* (Nashville: Broadman and Homan, 1995), p. 58.
- 26 See C.S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms*, in *The Inspirational Writing of C.S. Lewis* (New York: Inspirational Press, 1987), pp. 138-139.
- 27 James M. Boice, *Psalms*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1994), p. 77.
- 28 C.H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David* vol. 1 (Nashville: Nelson, Undated Reprint), p. 97.

