

Chapter 22

DAVID AND GOLIATH

1 SAMUEL 17

After the 400 years of the judges, the Israelites demanded that God give them a king. So God gave them Saul. The Philistines had invaded the land of Israel, and King Saul went to war against them.

Saul did not please God. So God told the prophet Samuel to anoint David to be Israel's next king. For a while David stayed home and watched his family's sheep. One day his father, Jesse, said to David, "Go to the battle and see how your older brothers are doing. Take food for them and a present for their captain." Early the next morning David loaded a cart with everything he needed. He arrived at the Israelite camp just as the soldiers were marching off to battle. He heard the soldiers shout a mighty battle cry, and he ran into the ranks to look for his brothers.

Then David saw Israelite soldiers flee in fear. Across the valley, out of the Philistine army marched a champion—a giant named Goliath. He was nine and a half feet tall. A lance was slung across his back. He held a huge spear in his hand. A sword was strapped to his belt. He wore a brass helmet, brass greaves on his legs, and a brass breastplate. His armor bearer held a large shield in front of him. Every

morning and every evening for forty days Goliath had come to challenge the armies of Israel. "Give me a man that we may fight together," he had bellowed. All of the Israelite armies feared Goliath. No one dared to fight him.

David heard Goliath's challenge echo across the valley again. "I defy the armies of Israel. Give me a man! If your man kills me, the Philistines will be your servants. But if I kill him, you must serve us!" he shouted.

That voice made David angry. "Who is this Philistine that he mocks the armies of the living God? What will be done for the man who kills him?" David asked.

The men of Israel said, "The king will make the man rich and give him the king's daughter to wife, and his family will pay no taxes in Israel."

Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard David talking and was angry with him. "Who are you?" he accused. "I know you have a proud heart, and you only want to make a name for yourself." But David ignored him.

When Saul heard that a man was willing to fight Goliath, Saul immediately sent for him. David said, "Do not let anyone be afraid of Goliath. I will go fight this Philistine."

Saul did not agree. “You are just a youth, and Goliath is a warrior from his youth.”

But David told Saul, “When I was keeping my father’s sheep, a bear came and stole a lamb, and I killed that bear. A lion came and took a lamb too, and I chased him. When the lion turned on me, I caught his mane and killed him. Jehovah delivered me out of the paw of the lion and the bear, and he will deliver me from this uncircumcised Philistine.”

Saul wondered how David could defeat Goliath. Saul gave David his armor, helmet, and sword. David put them on, but he could not even move. “I cannot go in this armor because I am not used to it,” he said. David removed the armor and instead took his shepherd’s staff, bag, and sling. He stopped by a little stream and chose five stones, put them in his bag, and went out to fight the giant.

When Goliath saw David, he mocked him. “Am I a dog that you come to me with sticks? Come here, and I will feed you to the beasts and birds!”

David said, “You come with a sword, spear, and shield, but I come to you in the name of Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel’s armies. I will feed *you* to the beasts and the birds, and everyone will know that there is a God in Israel. He does not save by sword or spear. The battle is God’s. He will give you into our hands.”

Then Goliath charged. David ran at him,

reached into his bag, took out a stone, and slung it at Goliath. God guided that stone, and it hit Goliath in the forehead and sunk in. He fell down on his face. David ran up to Goliath and cut off his head with the giant’s own sword. When the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they all turned and ran. Israel chased them back to the gates of the Philistines’ cities.

So David defeated Goliath—not with a sword, but in the name of God. The name of God is God’s grace toward his people whom he loves and his determination to cut off all his and our enemies. Goliath came against God as God’s enemy, so Goliath lost. By his name God also makes his people strong. This name of God is Jesus.



