

I Samuel Lesson 17

I Samuel Chapter 17

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Memory verses for this week: *Dan 12:8 And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?*

Dan 12:9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

Introduction: We continue our study on Samuel this week. In last week's lesson, we studied about David being chosen as the new king of Israel. At the end of the chapter, the current king, King Saul, began having trouble sleeping due to an evil spirit troubling him. The servants sought out a man who could play soothing music with the harp, and it was David that came to be the one chosen. This was all in the plan of God.

I. The Defiance of Israel by Goliath

1 Sam 17:1 Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephesdammim.

1 Sam 17:2 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.

1 Sam 17:3 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.

1 Sam 17:4 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.

Verse one gives us the location of the armies of the Philistines and long with the location of Israel in verse 2. The Israelites camped in the valley of Elah, which lay about 11 miles southwest of Jerusalem. The Philistines were in Ephesdammim which was between Shochoh and Azekah. This was in the plain of Judah leading down to the Philistine cities.

In this battle, the Philistines were the attackers while the Israelites were the defenders. The champion of the Philistines, Goliath, challenged the Israelites to settle the whole battle with a simple one on one combat. The height it gives us in verse 4 says he was six cubits and a span. In terms we understand, that made him about 9 feet and 9 inches tall. This was a huge man, possibly one of the largest fighters to ever live. Goliath was of Gath, a descendant of the giants whom Caleb had driven out of Hebron.

1 Sam 17:5 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.

1 Sam 17:6 And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders.

1 Sam 17:7 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.

1 Sam 17:8 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.

1 Sam 17:9 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.

1 Sam 17:10 And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.

1 Sam 17:11 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

These verses give us a description of the armor that Goliath wore. He was well protected, and have a very heavy set of armour. He calls upon the Israelites to send down a man to fight with him and makes a proposition that the loser would serve the winner. He calls the men the servants of Saul, and defies the whole army of Israel. This discouraged King Saul as well as the men serving in his army. It says that they were greatly afraid. The reason for this was because they were looking at this through the eyes of man, without regarding what God could do for them if they had faith.

Matthew Henry said this about Goliath.

Forty days the two armies lay encamped facing one another, each advantageously posted, but neither forward to engage. Either they were parleying and treating of an accommodation or they were waiting for recruits; and perhaps there were frequent skirmishes between small detached parties. All this while, twice a day, morning and evening, did the insulting champion appear in the field and repeat his challenge, his own heart growing more and more proud for his not being answered and the people of Israel more and more timorous, while God designed hereby to ripen him for destruction and to make Israel's deliverance the more illustrious. All this while David is keeping his father's sheep, but at the end of forty days Providence brings him to the field to win and wear the laurel which no other Israelite dares venture for. We have in these verses,

I. The present state of his family. His father was old (v. 12): He went among men for an old man, was taken notice of for his great age, above what was usual at that time, and therefore was excused from public services, and went not in person to the wars, but sent his sons; he had the honours paid him that were due his age, his hoary head was a crown

of glory to him. David's three elder brethren, who perhaps envied his place at the court, got their father to send for him home, and let them go to the camp, where they hoped to signalize themselves and eclipse him (v. 13, 14), while David himself was so far from being proud of the services he had done his prince, or ambitious of further preferment, that he not only returned from court to the obscurity of his father's house, but to care, and toil, and (as it proved, v. 34) the peril, of keeping his father's sheep. It was the praise of this humility that it came after he had the honour of a courtier, and the reward of it that it came before the honour of a conqueror. Before honour is humility. Now he had that opportunity of mediation and prayer, and other acts of devotion, which fitted him for what he was destined to more than all the military exercises of that inglorious camp could do.

1 Sam 17:12 Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehemjudah, whose name was Jesse; and he had eight sons: and the man went among men for an old man in the days of Saul.

1 Sam 17:13 And the three eldest sons of Jesse went and followed Saul to the battle: and the names of his three sons that went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and next unto him Abinadab, and the third Shammah.

1 Sam 17:14 And David was the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul.

Verse 12 explains that Jesse had 8 sons and four of them are named in the next two verses. The oldest 3 were in Saul's army.

II. David is Sent to the Army of Saul

1 Sam 17:15 But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

1 Sam 17:16 And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

1 Sam 17:17 And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren;

1 Sam 17:18 And carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.

1 Sam 17:19 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, were in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

1 Sam 17:20 And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.

1 Sam 17:21 For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army.

Verse 15 says that David had returned home from being with Saul and was working again for his father tending the sheep. David was a man always busy in his work which speaks well of him. Being in the King's palace did not give him a feeling of superiority, but he continued to work as he had in the past taking care of the sheep. We aren't given a reason why David had returned home, but no doubt God had intended for David to go up to the battle.

Jesse prepares to send David up to see about his brothers and see how the battle was progressing. He prepares some corn and ten loaves of bread to take up to his sons along with some cheese for the captain. David arrived in the camp just as the battle was about to break forth. It said that when David arrived, he shouted for the battle.

1 Sam 17:22 And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and saluted his brethren.

1 Sam 17:23 And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them.

1 Sam 17:24 And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.

While David was visiting with his brothers, Goliath came out and issued his challenge again. David heard the challenge, and was not moved like the others. It says all the men of Israel fled from him and were sore afraid.

1 Sam 17:25 And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.

1 Sam 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?

1 Sam 17:27 And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him.

1 Sam 17:28 And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

1 Sam 17:29 And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?

1 Sam 17:30 And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner.

David was asked whether he had seen this giant who was defying Israel. They informed him that Saul had made valuable promises to any man who would fight and kill Goliath. Then man who did this would be given riches and wed the king's daughter. On top of that, his family would be free of taxes. Eliab, David's oldest brother, had heard David and detected the scorn in his voice and how he rebuked the Israelite soldiers in his words. He mocks David and accuses him of neglecting the sheep so he could just come down and watch the battle. David had not been neglectful at all, and was sent by his father while another watched over the sheep.

He says in verse 29 "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" Of course there was a cause. God's people and the cause of the Lord was being put to shame by the boastful Philistine Goliath. Today, there is a cause for us also. What we face can sometimes seem more hopeless than going to a battle with a giant, but we need to not let the fears of this life keep us from taking part in the battle against Satan and the evil all about us.

III. David's Victory Over Goliath

1 Sam 17:31 And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him.

1 Sam 17:32 And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

1 Sam 17:33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

Some of the men relayed the words that David spoke to King Saul. He sends for David and he assures Saul that he was not afraid to go out and fight with Goliath. David's words were "Let no man's heart fail because of him". Saul looked the young man over and tells him that he was not able to go up against Goliath since he was just a youth and Goliath was a man of war from his youth.

Young people can look on this and learn that God can still use a young person in his service. If we are in God's will and doing a great work, believe me, God will give you the necessary strength you need to get the job done. David was unmoved and continues to insist that he can fight this battle.

1 Sam 17:34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock:

1 Sam 17:35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

1 Sam 17:36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

1 Sam 17:37 David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

David goes into some of his past experiences and assures Saul that God would give him the victory over the giant. He says that he had fought the lion and the bear that came upon his father's sheep, and he would fight this giant and God would deliver him into his hand. In our Christian lives, we are given small tests to see how strong we are.

You can rest assured that you won't conquer any giants until you can win the battle over the bear and the lion, whatever those are in your own life. Lots of battles in this life, and some are much harder than others. But with God's strength, we can go forth and be conquerors. Saul is moved by David, and tells him to Go, and the Lord be with thee.

1 Sam 17:38 And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail.

1 Sam 17:39 And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.

Saul does his best to prepare David for the battle and gives him some armour and a brass helmet along with a coat of mail. He also gives him a sword, but David tells him that he couldn't use these things. He had not proven them, and he puts them off. Remember that you can't be skillful with a tool you haven't mastered. If we want to be used in a great way in God's service, we need to know our bible and use the armour God has prepared for us.

1 Sam 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.

1 Sam 17:41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him.

1 Sam 17:42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.

1 Sam 17:43 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.

1 Sam 17:44 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.

David is a wise young man. He takes off the armour and weapons that he hasn't mastered, and took his own staff in his hand and put five smooth stones in his shepherd's bag. He takes out his sling and draws near to Goliath. He looks at him and starts immediately to make fun of him and curses David by his gods. He tells him to come on in and he'd feed his flesh to the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field.

1 Sam 17:45 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.

1 Sam 17:46 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.

1 Sam 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.

1 Sam 17:48 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.

1 Sam 17:49 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.

1 Sam 17:50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David.

1 Sam 17:51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

1 Sam 17:52 And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron.

What a great victory this was. David knew he would win because he came in the name of the Lord. Verse 45 recorded that as "*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.*"

David might not have come with a huge weapon, but he had mastered that sling shot. And he took one of those smooth stones out the bag, and whirled it around and let it fly. He sunk right into the head of Goliath, and he fell flat. He

then ran up and took Goliath's sword and cut off the head of this gigantic enemy of the Philistines. The giant came in the power of his sword and spear, but David came in the name of his God. There is no battle we can't win when we trust God and have him on our side. The Israelites rose with a shout and pursued and destroyed the Philistines all the way to Ekron.

J. Vernon McGee related Goliath to Satan in our lives today.

There are many great spiritual lessons in this chapter. For example, the giant represents the world; Saul, I think, represents Satan; and David represents the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. We are admonished, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15). We are in the world but not of it. What a difference there is between David and Samson. Samson treated the Philistines as friends—he even married one of them. David treated Goliath as an enemy. The world system, the Kosmos—which includes all governments, educational programs, and entertainments—is the enemy of the believer today. The interesting thing is that David's faith enabled him to go out to meet the giant and defeat him. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). It is the same lesson Joshua learned at Jericho: he found out that the battle is the Lord's. David also learned that he could not use the weapons of this world to fight the battle. He had to use his own weapons, his own methods—those in which God had schooled him. The believer today needs to recognize that the world can be overcome only by his faith and confidence in God.

1 Sam 17:53 And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents.

1 Sam 17:54 And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armour in his tent.

1 Sam 17:55 And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, whose son is this youth? And Abner said, As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell.

1 Sam 17:56 And the king said, Inquire thou whose son the stripling is.

1 Sam 17:57 And 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.

1 Sam 17:58 And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.

Saul is quite impressed with this young man, and tells his captain to find out more about the young boy. He says that he was David, son of thy servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.