

Assaulting the Giant

1Sam 17

Introduction:

1. David's battle with Goliath is without doubt the most famous incident in David's life
2. Even the secular world today, though it is increasingly ignorant of the Scriptures, easily understands that a "David and Goliath" reference is speaking of the triumph of one who was an overwhelming underdog.
3. This incident was important for David since it highlighted his great prowess and brought David public attention
4. This was helpful later on when Israel chose David as their king
5. God always provides the events and circumstances to bring about His appointments for us
6. Though the story of David and Goliath is quite famous, few people today know much about the details and the spiritual lessons from the incident
7. But these are the things that we want to examine in our study

I. THE SETTING FOR THE DUEL – VS 1-3

- The setting for the duel between David and Goliath was the attack of the Philistines upon Israel

A. *Time of the Attack* – “Now”

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. “Now” was a critical time for Israel
2. King Saul was having emotional problems and he was alienated from Samuel and God
3. This would be the perfect time to attack Israel and perhaps spies reported to the Philistine officials the problems of King Saul
4. When we let our dedication slacken and we let our spiritual strength

subside, then the enemy attacks

B. Tenacity of the Attackers – vs 1a

1 Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle...

1. The Philistines were a constant thorn in the flesh for Israel
 - a) *They had inflicted major damage on Israel when Eli was Israel's judge and priest*
 - b) *Since then they had been defeated twice – 1Sam 7, 14*
 - c) *But the Philistines did not give up – they wanted revenge*
2. Our spiritual enemies are just like the Philistines
 - a) *They are watchful for any advantage that they can gain over us*
 - b) *They are tenacious in their attacking and they are not easily discouraged*
 - c) *You may defeat temptation and overcome trial with great victory but the enemy will be back*
 - d) *We see this when the devil attacked Christ in the wilderness. He returned again and again.*

C. Territory of the Attack

1c ... and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephesdammin. 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.*

1. This territory is near the border between the tribe of Judah and Philistia
2. Shochoh was in Israel and Azekah was in Philistia
3. This area was about 15 miles from David's hometown Bethlehem and 15 miles from Goliath's hometown Gath
4. The Philistines were on one hill and the Israelites were on the other hill and the valley was between them
5. The topography was perfect for the Israelites / Philistines to see the fight in the valley
 - a) *The Israelites needed to see the battle so they could give David the*

- acclaim and respect that he deserved*
- b) *The Philistines needed to see David win the battle so they would think twice the next time they wanted to attack Israel*

The Setting for the Duel...

II. THE SUPERMAN IN THE DUEL – VS 4-11, 16

- We have looked at the setting for the battle between David and Goliath and now Scripture gives some important information about the two men in the battle

A. Description of Goliath

- Three things are said in regard to Goliath's description

1. His Heritage – vs 4 - “Goliath of Gath”

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.*

a) *“Goliath of Gath” tells us that he was a descendent of the famed family of Anak who produced giants in the land of Canaan*

b) *These giants were seen by the spies who were sent by Moses to check the land of Canaan – Num 13:33*

33 *And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.*

c) *During the days of Joshua when the promised land was conquered and divided, most of the giants were killed but Josh 11:22 says that they were still around*

22 *There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained.*

d) *Israel failed to completely and fully deal with the enemy and years later Goliath came back to haunt them*

e) *We must deal decisively with sin in our lives or it will eventually come back to attack us again*

2. His Height – “six cubits and a span”

a) *The most famous part of the description of Goliath is his height*

- b) *Depending on the length of a cubit, Goliath could have been from 9-12 feet tall*
- c) *Matthew Henry said he was 11 ft 4 inches tall*
- d) *Ryrie said he was 9 ft 9 in tall*
- e) *Since there was no basketball he was recruited by the military to intimidate the armies of other nations*
- f) *As tall as he was it was not that advantageous for we need more than physical height to win the greatest battles of life*
- g) *We need spiritual height and that was what David had*
- h) *David was taller than Goliath in the area that really counts*

3. His Hardware – vs 5-7

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. **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.

- a) *Even though he was tall, Goliath was armed with plenty of weaponry.*
- b) *Goliath was covered with armor – he was like a walking tank – all this brass might have weighed over 100 lbs*
- c) *This means that he was not agile and fast*
- d) *We need to put on the full armor of God which is the greatest armor of all*

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

- e) *With the armor of God, David defeated Goliath who only had armor of brass*

B. Declaration of Goliath – vs 8-9

- Here is Goliath's proposal to the army of Israel
 1. Deceitfulness of It

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. **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.

- a) *These words of Goliath were not true words*
- b) *We see this later after David defeated Goliath the Philistines did not become servants of Israel*
- c) *They were not about to give up to the Israelites*
- d) *This deceitfulness reflects the deceitfulness of sin and Satan*
- e) *The devil is a liar – you cannot trust him*
- f) *He makes promises that look appealing*
- g) *His lies deceive many*

2. Defiance in It

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

- a) *Defying the armies of Israel was not an innocent act*
- b) *To defy the army of Israel was to defy God – cp vs 26, 45*

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? **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.

- c) *The enemy of God's people and God's servant is also God's enemy*
- d) *Sin and Satan are in the business of defying God*
- e) *Sin and Satan want to convince you to defy God*
- f) *No one defies God and comes out the winner*

3. Duration of It

16 And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

- a) *Often in the Bible, 40 is the number of testing*
- b) *The appearance of Goliath 2x a day for 40 days was a testing time for Israel*
- c) *Saul had no remedy for Goliath and the only scheme he could come up with was to offer a reward to any soldier who would fight and win*
- d) *This reminds us that as spiritual conditions decline, men resort to gimmicks and door prizes to motivate people to do God's work*
- e) *To get people to attend services, read their Bible's, invite others churches must offer gum, candy, teddy bears, bicycles, free tickets to an amusement park or some other prize*
- f) *This is not a good commentary on the spirituality of a church*
- g) *We will never defeat Goliath that way*
- h) *We'll see that David was motivated by faith in God and concern for God's honor*

C. Dismay About Goliath – vs 11

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

- There are at least two significant reasons why dismay filled the hearts of Saul and the soldiers in Saul's army
- They were poor conduct and poor contemplation or, put in another way, Israel had a sin problem and a sight problem

1. Sin Problem

- a) *We look at King Saul to consider the sin problem*
- b) *Saul had sinned against God repeatedly and publicly*
- c) *In Gilgal he offered the sacrifice instead of waiting for Samuel to show up and offer the sacrifice – 1Sam 13*
- d) *On another occasion, King Saul disobeyed God and didn't destroy the spoil of the Amalekites – 1Sam 15*
- e) *Saul's sin cost him dearly*
 - (1) *It cost his fellowship and help from Samuel*

- (2) It cost him the presence of the spirit of God in his life
 - (3) It cost him the dynasty of the throne
 - (4) It cost him his emotional tranquility
- f) *Sin brings fear – Prov 28:1*
1 The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

2. Sight Problem

- a) *The Israelite army looked only at Goliath they did not look at God*
- b) *Their sight was only horizontal and not vertical*
- c) *If all you do is look at Goliath you will be dismayed*
- d) *Goliath circumstances are discouraging*
- e) *The reason that David succeeded here was that he saw more than Goliath, he saw God*
- f) *The reason Joshua and Caleb, the faithful spies, had a different and better report than the other 10 spies was that they saw God in the circumstances*
- g) *Victory comes by keeping our eyes on Christ*

The Superman in the Duel...

III. THE STRIPLING IN THE DUEL - vs 12-40

- Israel's representative in the duel was just a "stripling" – vs 56
1Sa 17:56 And the king said, Inquire thou whose son the stripling is.
- David was a full grown young man
- In the areas that mattered most David was the true giant

A. Son

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. **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. **14** And David was the youngest: and the three

eldest followed Saul. **15** But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

1. David is introduced in this passage as a “son”
2. This emphasizes his lowly position
3. Regarding his **age** – David was youngest
4. Regarding the **army** – he was excluded from going to battle
5. Regarding his **assignment** – he was given the lowly job of shepherding
6. What is said of David here is a great contrast to what is said of Goliath – he had great stature, great armor, great words
7. This is encouraging to us because it tells us that we don't have to be great in the eyes of the world to serve God

B. Shepherd

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

- Here we focus on those shepherding duties for there are some good lessons in them
 1. His Humility
 - a) *David's return to shepherding showed his great humility*
 - b) *He had been serving King Saul in the palace but then he goes back to shepherding*
 - c) *He does this without complaining*
 - d) *David was not a proud, boastful, arrogant soul in contrast to Goliath*
 - e) *This fit David for high service for the humble soul is the submissive soul*
Pr 15:33b ... and before honour is humility.
 - f) *Before the honor of slaying Goliath came the humility*
 2. His Demotion
 - a) *David had been armor-bearer but now that war came, he was not used as armor-bearer*
 - b) *David was doubtless not Saul's only armor bearer*

- c) *Joab, the general, had as many as ten armor bearers*
- d) *Being sent to the fields to watch sheep instead of going to the battlefield was a demotion*
- e) *His demotion in worldly position did not hinder his ability to serve God*

3. His Opportunity

- a) *David's shepherding, though a lowly task, provided him with some important opportunities for preparation for future tasks*
- b) *Being a shepherd gave David opportunity to spend much time alone with God*
 - (1) David's psalms show us that he used that time well
 - (2) A.W. Pink said, "The closet is the great battlefield of faith... let the foe be met and conquered in private, and we shall not have to mourn defeat when we meet him in public."
- c) *Being a shepherd gave David opportunity to experience God working miraculously on his behalf*
 - (1) When David spoke to Saul about fighting Goliath he mentioned killing a lion and a bear which had attacked the sheep
 - (2) David saw God's hand in his deliverance and it caused him to believe that God could deliver him from Goliath too

C. Servant

- The conflict between Israel and the Philistines had gone on for 40 days in a stalemate
- Jesse called David and gave him an assignment so David became a servant

1. Choosing of the Servant – vs 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;

- a) *This was a providential choosing for If Jesse had sent one of the other sons (only 3 were in the army) then David would have not have fought Goliath*

- b) *This was a preferred choosing for Jesse trusted David to carry out the assignment successfully*
- c) *This does not necessarily say that Jesse didn't trust the other four brothers but it does say that Jesse trusted David*

2. Command for the Servant – vs 17-18

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;

a) *Dedication*

- (1) Jesse told David to “run” to his brothers on the battlefield
- (2) There would have to be a great deal of dedication for David to run to his brothers
- (3) This task required zeal
- (4) “Run” reveals earnestness and promptness in service
- (5) To serve God well we must obey immediately and we must put our whole hearts into the service

b) *Danger*

- (1) Jesse told David to go to the “camp” where his three older brothers were
- (2) This camp was a dangerous place
- (3) It would take some courage for David to serve Jesse
- (4) It takes courage to serve God and live for Him
- (5) Too many want a place of service in God's army which is far away from the front lines
- (6) Some fear that if they serve God they risk losing friends, money, position or prestige

c) *Duty*

- (1) Jesse gave David a list of duties in his service
- (2) Take supplies to the brothers, take cheese to their captain and check on the welfare of the brothers
- (3) Some want to serve God but they don't want the duties – attend church services, read the Bible, pray, witness

- (4) They want the position and the pay but they don't want the perspiration of work

d) *Dependability*

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

- (1) The need for dependability is seen in the command to “take their pledge”
- (2) “Take their pledge” meant that David was to bring back some token from the brothers of their welfare
- (3) The pledge could be letters, spoils of war and this involved trust
- (4) Serving God requires dependability

3. Character of the Servant

19 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, *were* in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. **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.

- Now we look at how David performed his servant duties for Jesse

a) *Obedient – “David took and went... commanded him”*

- (1) David did what he was told – you can't improve on that
- (2) That is what God wants us to do
- (3) Failure to do as God commands is the source of many of our problems
- (4) In contrast, obedience brings blessings
- (5) Obedience is the key to greater assignments

b) *Prompt – “rose up early in the morning”*

- (1) He didn't waste time or put off his work
- (2) There was no delay in his obedience
- (3) Delay is disobedience
- (4) Those who are not prompt are poor servants
- (5) David's promptness allowed him to be there when Goliath came out and defied God leading to David's challenge of Goliath and eventually his duel with Goliath

- (6) Big doors swing on small hinges and great advances in life often come because of what seems to small things
- c) *Responsible* – “left his sheep with a keeper”
- (1) David did not forsake one duty for another
 - (2) When he left the sheep he made sure that someone was there to watch them
 - (3) If you have a job to do at church and you are not going to be here then do what David did – make sure you leave the sheep with someone
- d) *Zealous* – “ran”

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) When David got to the camp he ran to his brothers
 - (2) Some determine to be zealous when they are promoted to a higher task
 - (3) Those who show zeal in little tasks will show zeal in the big tasks
- e) *Mannerly* – “he saluted his brethren”
- (1) “saluted” is translated from two Hebrew words
 - (2) One word is “shalom” – peace
 - (3) The other word means to inquire – David inquired of their well-being
 - (4) Thus David’s greeting was both a courteous greeting and a compassionate greeting showing the manners of David

4. Concern of the Servant – vs 23, 24, 26

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. **24** And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid. **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?

- Divine providence caused David to arrive in the camp in time to hear the daily rant of Goliath
- Hearing the words of Goliath and seeing the Israelite soldiers retreat in fear caused David great concern
- a) *Concern for the Dread in Israel*
 - (1) Israel's soldiers were "sore afraid" of Goliath
 - (2) David inquired what was to be done for the soldier who would fight Goliath.
 - (3) Was there not a soldier with the courage and inspiration to fight Goliath?
 - (4) It is not a good sight when the people of God flee the enemy
- b) *Concern for the Dishonor of God*
 - (1) This was David's greater concern – vs 26
 - (2) To defy the army of God was to defy God himself
 - (3) David was so upset that they would allow God to be dishonored
 - (4) When we become concerned about the glory and honor of God then we will do great things for God
 - (5) But today few are concerned about God's honor and they don't do much for God

5. Criticism for the Servant – vs 28

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.

a) *Sureness of the Criticism*

- (1) Every true servant of God will know criticism
- (2) The better your service the more severe will be the criticism that you receive
- (3) David was serving well so the criticism is not surprising

- (4) Prepare for criticism so that disappointment and discouragement will not come
 - (5) Some naively think that if they serve God will that they will be applauded and praised
 - (6) You might gain some recognition but you will surely come under criticism
- b) *Source of the Criticism*
- (1) David was criticized by his own brother who was in the army
 - (2) This would make the criticism more painful
 - (3) We can take criticism from the enemy easier than from our family / friends
 - (4) If the Philistines criticize David that is one thing, but it was his own brother
 - (5) Pastors sometimes face criticism from those who should be standing with them
 - (6) Sometimes more criticism comes from church members than from the lost world
- c) *Specifics of the Criticism*

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.

- Nothing that Eliab said was nice
 - What Eliab said was false, mean, unspiritual and hypocritical
- (1) Imprudence – “Why camest thou down hither?”
 - (a) *This implies that David was unwise in going to the battlefield*
 - (b) *This says that David had no good reason for going to the camp*
 - (c) *David had good reason to be there – his father sent him*
 - (d) *David was being attacked by the one he was sent there to help*

- (e) *Sounds like Jesus being killed by those He came to help*
- (2) Irresponsibility – “with whom hast thou left those few sheep?”
- (a) *This question implies that David was shirking his responsibility of watching the sheep to come to the battle area*
- (b) *David had acted responsibly since he left the sheep with a keeper*
- (c) *Before you criticize someone make sure that you have the facts first – Eliab didn’t*
- (3) Insignificance – “few”
- (a) *This was an attempt to belittle David*
- (b) *Eliab did not like the fact that David showed up and exposed the lack of courage in the army*
- (c) *Maybe it still irked Eliab that David had been called to the palace to serve King Saul*
- (d) *Proud and envious people like Eliab are always putting others down*
- (4) Insolence – “I know thy pride”
- 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.**
- (a) *Some say that “proud” here involves insolence and arrogance*
- (b) *Eliab accused David of being proud since he inquired about Goliath*
- (c) *Many believers are accused of being “holier than thou”*
- (5) Iniquity – “naughtiness of thine heart”
- (a) *Before he gives David a chance to answer any of the questions, Eliab pronounces the verdict – David is evil or bad*
- (b) *“I know” sounds like a know-it-all attitude*

- (6) Immaturity – “that thou mightest see the battle”
- (a) *He charges David with only wanting to see the excitement of the battle*
 - (b) *He wants others to believe that David does not recognize the seriousness of war and in an immature way he thinks it is entertaining*
 - (c) *It was Eliab who did not see the seriousness of the battle*

d) *Success Over the Criticism – vs 29-30*

29 And David said, What have I now done? *Is there not a cause?*
30 And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner.

- (1) David’s response to the criticism was noble
- (2) He challenged his brother in the form of two questions
 - (a) *These 2 questions would challenge Eliab to check the facts which would show that there was no reason for so many mean accusations*
 - (b) *David here puts Eliab on the defensive*
 - (c) *Do not be sidetracked by the critics – just stick to your job which you know is right and honorable*

D. Soldier – vs 31

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

- The fourth position in which we see David is as a soldier
- David’s talk about Goliath and the lack of a response to the taunts of Goliath led some to believe that David was willing to accept the challenge of Goliath
- This talk was reported to King Saul who sent to David
- This encounter led to David becoming a Saul soldier in the army

1. Examining of David

- Before anyone is allowed into the military of our country he is duly examined
- At least there is a physical exam and maybe some written exams

a) *Test of Courage*

- (1) David had done a lot of talking about God's honor and Goliath now we see if it was just hot air and boasting
- (2) Is David a man of courage or not?
- (3) It is easy to talk out before the men of the camp, but would David be as brave before King Saul?
- (4) When David was taken to King Saul his courage seemed even stronger – vs 32
32 And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.
- (5) Some people talk big until they come to the place where commitment is needed then their conduct does not match their big talk

b) *Test of Contempt*

- 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.**
- (1) Saul had contempt for David and his chances of success
 - (2) He had already passed a similar test of criticism from Eliab
 - (3) Saul did not think that David could defeat Goliath
 - (4) Every great endeavor has to overcome these discouragers
 - (5) Saul's pessimistic contempt of David did not discourage David and cause him to give up

c) *Test of Credentials*

- Saul did not think that David had the credentials to fight Goliath
- But David argued that he did have the proper credentials to fight Goliath

(1) David had feats

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: **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. **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.

- (a) *Reporting these feats should not be taken as bragging*
- (b) *When applying for a job one better have some credentials*
- (c) *Relating these credentials, when they are true, is not bragging*
- (d) *Saul needed to know that David was not inexperienced in hazardous combat*
- (e) *This kind of bravery and strength would be needed to defeat Goliath*
- (f) *We must win battles in private if we are going to win them in public*

(2) David had faith

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.

- (a) *David's greatest credential was faith*
- (b) *David was a man of faith and that is why he is mentioned in Heb 11 – the hall of fame of faith*
- (c) *Goliath was armed with brass and David was armed with faith*

2. Employing of David – vs 37c

37c ... And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

- a) *After he evaluated David's credentials, Saul employed David as a*

soldier of Israel

b) *His first assignment was to fight Goliath*

c) *Early in the morning David was a shepherd and by late in the day he was a soldier*

d) *God can put His chosen in the place of special service whenever He wishes*

3. Equipping of David

a) *Armor of Flesh*

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. **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.

(1) Saul knew nothing about the spiritual armor so all he could offer David for protection was his armor

(2) David wisely rejected the armor of Saul

(3) It was too heavy and cumbersome

(4) All the trappings of the world are not much help in our battle with the enemy of our souls

b) *Armor of Faith*

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) Five smooth stones and a sling was David's armor

(2) It looked puny and inadequate compared to all the brass that Goliath was wearing

(3) But brass with no faith is not as helpful as a sling with faith

(4) In churches we see the armor of faith belittled and despised

(a) *Many churches believe that preaching is inadequate*

(b) *They insist on heavy doses of psychology, parties, banquets, entertainment*

- (c) *Apostate churches even doubt the including preaching as part of their worship*
- (d) *Prayer and purity are no longer seen as important armor*

The Stripling in the Duel...

IV. THE SPECIFICS OF THE DUEL - VS 40-58

- Scripture had given a good introduction to the two participants in the duel
- Now we look at the specifics of the duel itself

A. Entering into the Duel

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.

41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield *went* before him. **48** And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

- It was up to David to start the battle since Goliath had been challenging the Israelites for weeks
- Goliath had been ready for a long time
- Now David grabbed 5 smooth stones for his sling and headed toward the giant

1. Daring

- a) *Great courage was required for David to head toward Goliath*
- b) *This courage was uncommon for not one other Israelite had volunteered to fight Goliath*
- c) *David would stand alone against Goliath and we are going to serve God well we might have to stand alone at times*
- d) *David's courage came from faith in God*
- e) *Any great work for God requires courage*

2. Dispatch – “he ran toward the army to meet the Philistine”

- a) *David did not drag his feet when it came to the battle*
- b) *This is the 3rd time that running is associated with David in this chapter*
 - (1) *He ran to the camp – vs 17*
 - (2) *He ran to his brothers in the camp – vs 22*
 - (3) *And here David ran toward Goliath – vs 48*
 - (4) *All of this running speaks of diligence and dedication*
- c) *If we are going to serve God successfully then we must be earnest, zealous and enthusiastic*

3. Disdaining

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.*

- a) *Viewing of Goliath - “Looked about”*
 - (1) *This is the Hebrew word that means to “scan”*
 - (2) *When David approaches Goliath one can just see the giant leaning forward, squinting his eyes and looking intently at David*
 - (3) *He wondered who this unarmed kid was who dared to come out against him*
- b) *The world does a lot of earnest looking at believers who dare to live a life of godliness*
- c) *The ungodly will scrutinize your every move*

B. Exchanges in the Duel

- *As David came near Goliath the two exchanged words*
 - *The words of Goliath were polluted words*
 - *The words of David were pious words*
1. *Polluted Words – vs 43-44*
 - a) *There was pride – “am I a dog”*

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) Goliath's pride was hurt because David came after Goliath with a stick
- (2) "What do you think I am, a dog, that you can come after me with a stick?"
- (3) Goliath was concerned about his honor but David was interested in God's honor

b) *There was profanity – "cursed"*

- (1) He cursed David in the name of his god
- (2) The profane mouth of Goliath shows his corruption

c) *There was promise – vs 44*

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.

- (1) This was corrupt since it all depended on self
- (2) He didn't need God he had his own gods

2. Pious Words

- David's speech was a great contrast to Goliath's speech

a) *Protection – vs 45a*

45a Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield...

- (1) Goliath's armor really was impressive to the natural eye
- (2) But David had the best armor
- (3) He had the protection of the armor of God

b) *Protesting – vs 45b*

45b ... 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) Goliath had spoken against God earlier and that upset David
- (2) The godly are upset by foul talk and when God is dishonored they protest

(3) David was not upset at how Goliath viewed him, he was upset at the way Goliath viewed God

c) *Promise – vs 46*

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) David's promise is noble because it is prefixed by dependence on the Lord
- (2) David promised victory but he depended on God's help

d) *Purpose - vs 47*

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) Goliath would win the battle in order to exalt himself
- (2) David would win the battle to exalt God
- (3) David wanted God to be exalted before the Philistines and also before the Israelites
- (4) David was practicing what Paul spoke of in 1Cor 10:31
1Co 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.
- (5) Goliath was a man of vain glory and David was all about God's glory

C. Execution in the Duel

1. Method of the Execution

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 used a slingshot to execute Goliath

a) *Practicality*

- (1) Many have viewed the slingshot as a very strange way to attack Goliath but it was the most logical weapon David could have chosen
- (2) David could not get close enough to Goliath to use a sword or spear
- (3) Using a slingshot allowed David to maintain his distance
- (4) When we battle for the Lord our methods may seem strange and inadequate to the world

b) *Popularity*

- (1) The sling was commonly used in military attacks
- (2) The sling was the rifle of the period and marksmen with the sling could hit the bullseye as well as modern shooters

Jg 20:16 Among all this people *there were* seven hundred chosen men lefthanded; every one could sling stones at an hair *breadth*, and not miss.

c) *Power*

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. **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) The power of the sling is seen in vs 49 which says that David could sling a stone that sunk into Goliath's forehead
- (2) With this kind of power we can see why the sling was not a toy but an offensive weapon

d) *Precision*

- (1) We saw in Judges 20:16 that soldiers could sling a stone within a hair breadth
- (2) Precision was needed by David since Goliath was covered from head to foot with armor
- (3) David did have an opening since the face of Goliath was not covered

2. Miracle of the Execution

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.*

- a) *God guided that stone so that it hit Goliath in the right place*
- b) *David hitting his target on his first shot was a combination of diligent practice by David and God's miracle-working power*

3. Momentum of the Execution

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. **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.

- a) *David's slaying of Goliath had a devastating effect on the Philistines*
- b) *Like a great play in a football game, David's slaying of Goliath swung the momentum of the battle from one side to the other*
- c) *The Philistines saw their champion down and they fled*
- d) *What kind of influence are we? Do we encourage others to live closer to the Lord or to turn from the Lord to a defiled and defeated life?*

4. Might of the Execution

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. **53** And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents.

- a) *The initial might of the execution was seen in the fall of Goliath to the ground and the thunderous crash as the armor clanged*
- b) *The might was also seen in what happened to the Philistine army*

after the slaying of Goliath

- c) *Many Philistines were killed and the remainder were driven back to their own land*
- d) *Many spoils were taken*
- e) *When God works you don't have to prop up the results or pad the statistics to make it look like a victory*

5. Memorials of the Execution

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

- a) *Taking the head of Goliath to Jerusalem (a Jebusite stronghold) would send a message to the enemies of Israel*
- b) *Goliath's head would send an encouraging message to Israelites about the power of God*
- c) *To many, Goliath's head was a hideous memorial but we need some hideous memorials of sin to show people the terrible price of sin*
- d) *Sin is falsely advertised in pictures but not ghastly scenes*
- e) *The results of sin are hideous and we need forceful reminders of that fact*

D. Enquiry After the Duel

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.* **56** And the king said, *Inquire thou whose son the stripling is.* **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. **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.*

1. This is a surprising conversation between Abner and King Saul
2. Saul should have recognized his harpist
3. This has been a puzzle to commentators over the years

