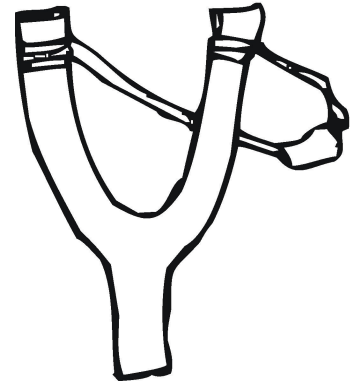


David and Goliath

1 Samuel 17:1 - 17:58

The Philistines gathered their army together for war. They came to Socoh in Judah. They set up camp at Ephes Dammim. It was between Socoh and Azekah. Saul and the army of Israel gathered together. They camped in the Valley of Elah. They lined up their men to fight against the Philistines. The Philistine army was camped on one hill. Israel's army was on another. The valley was between them.



A mighty hero named Goliath came out of the Philistine camp. He was from Gath. He was more than nine feet tall. He had a bronze helmet on his head. He wore a coat of bronze armor. It weighed 125 pounds. On his legs he wore bronze guards. He carried a bronze javelin on his back. His spear was as big as a weaver's rod. Its iron point weighed 15 pounds. The man who carried his shield walked along in front of him.

Goliath stood and shouted to the soldiers of Israel. He said, "Why do you come out and line up for battle? I'm a Philistine. You are servants of Saul. Choose one of your men. Have him come down and face me. If he's able to fight and kill me, we'll become your slaves. But if I win and kill him, you will become our slaves and serve us."

Goliath continued, "This very day I dare the soldiers of Israel to send a man down to fight against me."

Saul and the whole army of Israel heard what the Philistine said. They were terrified.

David was the son of an Ephrathite. His name was Jesse. He was from Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight sons. When Saul was king, Jesse was already very old. Jesse's three oldest sons had followed Saul into battle. The oldest son was Eliab. The second was Abinadab. The third was Shammah. David was the youngest. The three oldest sons followed Saul. But David went back and forth from Saul's camp to Bethlehem. He went to Bethlehem to take care of his father's sheep.

Every morning and evening Goliath came forward and stood there. He did it for 40 days.

Jesse said to his son David, "Get at least half a bushel of grain that has been cooked. Also get ten loaves of bread. Take all of it to your brothers. Hurry to their camp. Take along these ten chunks of cheese to the commander of their company. Find out how your brothers are doing. Bring me back some word about them. They are with Saul and all of the men of Israel. They are in the Valley of Elah. They are fighting against the Philistines."

Early in the morning David left his father's flock in the care of a shepherd. David loaded up the food and started out, just as Jesse had directed.

David reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions. The soldiers were shouting the war cry. Israel and the Philistines were lining up their armies for battle. The armies were facing each other.

David left what he had brought with the man who took care of the supplies. He ran to the battle lines and greeted his brothers. As David was talking with them, Goliath stepped forward from his line. Goliath was a mighty Philistine hero from Gath. He again dared someone to fight him, and David heard it.

When Israel's army saw Goliath, all of them ran away from him. That's because they were filled with fear.

The men of Israel had been saying, "Just look at how this man keeps stepping forward! Again and again he dares Israel to fight him. The king will make the man who kills him very wealthy. He will also give him his daughter to be his wife. He won't require anyone in his family to pay any taxes in Israel."

David spoke to the men who were standing near him. He asked them,

"What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine? Goliath is bringing shame on Israel. What will be done for the one who removes it? This Philistine isn't even circumcised. He dares the armies of the living God to fight him. Who does he think he is?"

The men told David what Israel's soldiers had been saying. The men told him what would be done for the man who killed Goliath.

David's oldest brother Eliab heard him speaking with the men. So he burned with anger at him. He asked him,

"Why have you come down here? Who did you leave those few sheep in the desert with? I know how proud you are. I know how evil your heart is. The only reason you came down here was to watch the battle."

"What have I done now?" said David.

"Can't I even speak?"

Then he turned away to speak to some other men. He asked them the same question he had asked before. And they gave him the same answer.

Someone heard what David said and reported it to Saul. So Saul sent for him.

David said to Saul, "Don't let anyone lose hope because of that Philistine. I'll go out and fight him."

Saul replied, "You aren't able to go out there and fight that Philistine. You are too young. He's been a fighting man ever since he was a boy."

But David said to Saul, "I've been taking care of my father's sheep. Sometimes a lion or a bear would come and carry off a sheep from the flock. Then I would go after it and hit it. I would save the sheep it was carrying in its mouth. If it turned around to attack me, I would grab hold of its hair. I would strike it down and kill it. In fact, I've killed both a lion and a bear. I'll do the same thing to this Philistine. He isn't even circumcised. He has dared the armies of the living God to fight him."

"The Lord saved me from the paw of the lion. He saved me from the paw of the bear. And he'll save me from the powerful hand of this Philistine too."

Saul said to David, "Go. And may the Lord be with you."

Then Saul dressed David in his own military clothes. He put a coat of armor on him. He put a bronze helmet on his head. David put on Saul's sword over his clothes. He walked around for a while in all of that armor because he wasn't used to it.



"I can't go out there in all of this armor," he said to Saul. "I'm not used to it." So he took it off.

Then David picked up his wooden staff. He went down to a stream and chose five smooth stones. He put them in the pocket of his shepherd's bag. Then he took his sling in his hand and approached Goliath.

At that same time, the Philistine kept coming closer to David. The man who was carrying Goliath's shield walked along in front of him.

Goliath looked David over. He saw how young he was. He also saw how tanned and handsome he was. And he hated him. He said to David, "Why are you coming at me with sticks? Do you think I'm only a dog?"

The Philistine called down curses on David in the name of his god. "Come over here. I'll feed your body to the birds of the air! I'll feed it to the wild animals!"

David said to Goliath, "You are coming to fight against me with a sword, a spear and a javelin. But I'm coming against you in the name of the Lord who rules over all. He is the God of the armies of Israel. He's the one you have dared to fight against.

"This very day the Lord will hand you over to me. I'll strike you down. I'll cut your head off. This very day I'll feed the bodies of the Philistine army to the birds of the air. I'll feed them to the wild animals. Then the whole world will know there is a God in Israel.

"The Lord doesn't save by using a sword or a spear. And everyone who is here will know it. The battle belongs to the Lord. He will hand all of you over to us."

As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly to the battle line to meet him. He reached into his bag. He took out a stone. He put it in his sling. He slung it at Goliath. The stone hit him on the forehead and sank into it. He fell to the ground on his face.

So David won the fight against Goliath with a sling and a stone. He struck the Philistine down and killed him. He did it without even using a sword.

David ran and stood over him. He took hold of Goliath's sword and pulled it out. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword.

The Philistines saw that their hero was dead. So they turned around and ran away.

Then the men of Israel and Judah shouted and rushed forward. They chased the Philistines to the entrance of Gath. They chased them to the gates of Ekron. The dead bodies of the Philistines were scattered all along the road to Gath and Ekron. That's the road that leads to Shaaraim.

Israel's army returned from chasing the Philistines. They had taken everything from the Philistine camp.

David picked up Goliath's head. He brought it to Jerusalem. He put Goliath's weapons in his own tent.

Saul had been watching David as he went out to meet the Philistine. He spoke to Abner, the commander of the army. He said to him, "Abner, whose son is that young man?"

Abner replied, "King Saul, I don't know. And that's just as sure as you are alive."

The king said, "Find out whose son that young man is."

After David killed Goliath, he returned to the camp. Then Abner brought him to Saul.

"Young man, whose son are you?" Saul asked him.

David said, "I'm the son of Jesse from Bethlehem."

