

The Life of David

Week 3: The Giant Killer

1 Samuel 17

Dr. Matt Cassidy ---- September 3, 2023

Well, good morning! Strap in! Who—we are in 1 Samuel chapter 17. Go there. It's a good thing. Today we're going to learn how to slay a giant. That's the passage we're going to look at today. Anybody in the house want to kill a giant? Yeah. Let's make this a fun time. Do you want to know how to find true courage that motivated a young teenager to charge a monster that was terrorizing a king, an army, and an entire nation for over a month? True courage. Anybody here just tired of cowering?

Today the epic story of David versus Goliath – David versus a giant. What is the giant in your life? I mean, life just brings us giants to give us opportunities to trust God in whole new ways. Giants--circumstances or whatever causes us to be fearful or angry—we realize that we can't control this part of our life. It's different for different people because people have different fears, different things they're afraid of losing or experiencing. So, one person can run into a burning building without fear, but maybe that same person can't go to a counselor's office. He's afraid of a counselor but not a fire. It could be an event, a memory, it could be an addiction to overcome. It could be a person. Whatever it might be, but it just shows you can't do this. You're losing, all the time.

And here's the thing about giants. Know this: they're patient. I mean, they'll just stay there. They'll stand over you and mock your fear or anger for a day or a month or a decade. Giants don't leave until someone kills them. And we're going to learn how to slay a giant today. Do you want to kill a giant? Yeah. You're going to need real courage. That's going to be the theme. You're going to need real courage.

The Source of True Courage

And there are different kinds of courage—not just any courage. David and Goliath both have courage. It will be real versus fake. If you want to kill a giant, you're going to find out that courage comes from different sources. That's the key. It's what these men put their trust, their

faith, their hope in; it's what they boast in. That's how they get the courage that they have. And if they boast and have faith in things that are foolish, they're going to have a foolish kind of courage. David and Saul and Goliath are all trusting, but they're trusting in different things. They're all going to have courage, but they're going to have a different kind of courage.

The theme today on how to slay a giant is where true courage comes from. There's fake and real—there's life and death in this. If you have a tissue paper kind of courage that is born from, or its hope, its faith, its boasting, is in your own intellect, your own strength, your own wealth, to solve whatever problem comes your way, it doesn't take much, if it's just tissue paper. Just a little bit of water and it dissolves. But true courage that's based on faith and hope and trust and boasting in knowing the nature of Jehovah God and what His values are and how to live accordingly—that will be a courage that's as hard as diamonds.

So, just to make this perfectly clear, that's the theme of the story. Courage has a source, and the source is what we put our faith, hope, trust in—what we boast in. If I'm making this confusing, there's a passage in the Bible that just says, *Don't put your faith, trust, hope or boasting in these things, but rather do this*. Watch, it's just a list. And it shows up in our story.

Jeremiah 9:23-24

This is what the Lord says: “Don't let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. ²⁴ But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am the Lord who demonstrates unfailing love and who brings justice and righteousness to the earth, and that I delight in these things. I, the Lord, have spoken!”

But in Jeremiah 9, it says, “This is what Jehovah says: do not let the wise boast in their wisdom. Don't let the powerful boast in their power. Don't let the rich boast in their riches. But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am Jehovah, who demonstrates unfailing love and who will bring justice and righteousness to the earth. I delight in these things. I, Jehovah, have spoken.”

These are three things that foolish people put their faith in, because it's not wise and it's a courage that can't handle a giant that comes into their lives. “Let not the wise man boast in his

wisdom ...” It’s easy to do that, isn’t it? *I solve problems. I’m a problem solver. What’s the problem, what’s the solution? I’ve got this. You just need to read more. You need to think about it more.* And then a giant comes into our lives and we can’t reason our way out of it. Did you know there are giants in our lives where life doesn’t make sense and it’s not going to make sense? We cannot understand it. And this giant will stand over us and mock our petty courage because we have put faith in our ability to reason our way out of it. It’s no wonder we’re angry or cowering in fear. That’s foolish faith that leads to a shallow courage.

And then he says, “Let the strong person not boast in their strength.” That’s my go-to. I mean, just work hard. When life gets hard, you work harder. What you need is a good work ethic. You power your way through this. *I get stuff done. That’s what I do.* And then life—a giant—shows up and says, *Oh no, there are not enough hours for this. Your work ethic won’t fix this. This is the youngest you’re going to be for the rest of your life, and you can’t keep up right now.* Look at you. Most people can juggle four balls—*I can juggle six.* And then life—a giant, circumstances—says, *Here’s thirty balls. Keep juggling. And here are two knives and here’s a running chain saw. How’s your juggling now?*

And this giant stands over you and mocks because you had a dumb courage that was based on a faith in your own strength. And there’s not enough strength for this.

And then he says, “Let not the wealthy person put their confidence”—or boasting—“in their wealth.” And that’s what we do a lot, don’t we? *Just throw money at it. What’s the problem? Just throw money at it.* And there are giants that show up, and they can eat through a hundred thousand dollars like it’s a mid-morning snack and not even feel the difference. And there are a lot of problems in life that can’t be solved with money.

So, don’t take courage, don’t take confidence, don’t put your faith, in that kind of source for your courage. It won’t work. If the foundation for your life for your security and your significance, your identity, is something that can be taken away or stolen or just kind of aged out, then you should live in fear. You should be afraid. You should be angry. Because it’s just a matter of time before that giant shows up and mocks you. And if you take that as your source of courage, you’re going to find, in this storyline, that’s what makes King Saul cower, and this is what’s going to kill the giant Goliath—a bad faith leading to bad kinds of courage.

So, just in summary, today what you’re going to see is a contrast in trust, in the object of their faith. We’re going to compare big, strong men. And they put their faith in something weak,

in contrast to a weak man who puts his faith in something else; his courage comes in knowing Jehovah God. That's what's happening today.

So, anybody want to kill a giant today?—a giant that's stronger than your strength, wiser than your intellect, that can't be bought with your wealth? That's what is going on. To do that, you have to have the right kind of courage, the real courage. And that real courage comes from faith. And like the passage says, He is "Jehovah, the living God who overflows with everlasting love and brings righteousness and justice to the earth." That's what He loves.

The Challenge

That's the story today. Here we go. It takes place—the scene is the Valley of Elah. On the eastern bank there's the very well-resourced army of the Philistines. And they are ready for war. And on the west slope is Israel. And they're mostly farmers and ranchers and they're just getting by. But they serving the living God. And in between, on that flat area, is no man's land. You don't want to be there. It's the valley of death. It's the danger zone.

And the Philistines call down their champion to the fifty-yard line of that valley, that flat land there. He calls them all out. Now the key to understanding what we're supposed to be learning in this passage about God and the nature of courage and faith is to see the details of this description of Goliath. Because the way this is written, this is unique to all of Hebrew ancient literature everywhere—in the Bible and outside of the Bible. It is not the nature of the language, and it's not the nature of the writers to give this lengthy list with this much detail. And it's purposeful.

... an almost grotesquely quantitative embodiment of a hero that is a hulking monument to this obtusely mechanical conception of what constitutes power.

--- Robert Alter

Hebrew literary scholar Robert Alter says this: "It's an almost grotesquely quantitative embodiment of a hero that is a hulking monument to this obtusely mechanical conception of what constitutes power." Yeah, I don't know what that means either. So, he's using his big words

to say that this writer is going to extensive lengths and violating all sorts of Hebrew literary styles to say that this is what everyone is looking at the definition of strength and power and invincibility. He's building it up to see how it falls down. So, it's *Behold Goliath!*

1 Samuel 17:4-7

A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall. ⁵ He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing about 125 pounds; ⁶ on his legs he wore bronze shin guards and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. ⁷ His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed sixteen pounds.

Here's the description: "And the champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out from the Philistine camp, and he was nine feet tall. He had a bronze helmet on his head and he wore a coat of scale armor that was bronze, weighing 125 pounds. On his legs he wore bronze shin guards and had a bronze javelin that was slung on his back. And he had a spear shaft that was like a weaver's beam. It had an iron point on the top of it that weighed sixteen pounds."

Goliath is a human tank. And I want you to know and understand that the description of his armory is to show the technological advances of the Philistine army. Bronze, bronze, bronze, bronze, and an iron spear tip that weighs sixteen pounds. All of that is to make you think, *Wow, this is the latest and most expensive material that could be used for detecting and killing the enemies.*

And Goliath has great courage and confidence, and why wouldn't he? He's got 250 pounds of gear on. He's nine-feet-something tall. He has a great record. And he's trusting in that. That's where his hope is. That's why he is courageous. That's why he has confidence. And he's going to call out Saul, the king of Israel, by name.

Now Saul is almost the theme here, because he's the king of Israel, but in his description that we read in weeks previous, he was head and shoulders above anyone else. He's the biggest man in all of Israel. And wow, he's courageous and heroic until he finds out he's not the biggest man in the Valley of Elah. And since he put his faith in that, in his strength, he doesn't have courage any more.

1 Samuel 17:8-11

Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, “Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. ⁹ If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us.” ¹⁰ Then the Philistine said, “This day I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other.” ¹¹ On hearing the Philistine’s words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

And so, twenty times Saul’s name is going to be used. Here’s Goliath calling out. “Goliath stood and shouted at the ranks of Israel, ‘Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine? Are you not here as servants of Saul? So choose a man and have him come down to me. And if he is able to fight and kill me, we’ll become your subjects. But if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us.’ And then the Philistine said, ‘This day I defy the ranks of Israel. Give me a man and let us fight each other.’ And then, hearing these Philistine words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.”

1 Samuel 17:14-15

David was the youngest ... ¹⁵ David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father’s sheep of Bethlehem.

Listen to the music. Watch this author tell a great story. Because the next scene is eighteen miles away. And there’s a little sheep running across the pasture, and a butterfly lands on its ear. And there’s a shepherd boy under a tree playing a guitar. Look at the contrast in the next sentence: “David, the youngest, went back and forth from Saul to tend his father’s sheep in Bethlehem.” Three words are describing this young boy. He’s seventeen years old. But he’s the youngest. He’s a shepherd boy. And he runs errands.

1 Samuel 17:16

For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand.

Now back to the battle ... forty days it says ... forty days the giant comes out. “For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand.” Twice a day for forty days he comes out and kicks sand in the face of all of Israel and mocks their God. He’s patient. Giants are patient. He’s coming back again. They will keep coming back until somebody slays this giant. For breakfast he kicks sand in their faces. By the time they get it out he’s back for the evening to kick sand in their faces again. For forty days ... that’s from now until mid-October that this giant is walking in, opening your front door, taking your kids’ Halloween candy and eating it in front of you and then walking out because you won’t do anything. You think if you ignore him that he will go away. That’s not how the giants work here. You can’t deny it. And he’s not going to change.

If you want to kill a giant, you have to change the kind of courage you have. And to change the kind of courage you have, you have to change what you have faith in, what you trust in, what you boast about. And it can’t be about your power or your wealth or your intelligence, because this giant kicks sand in the face of that.

Challenge Accepted

1 Samuel 17:26

David asked the men standing near him, “What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?”

Forty days, twice a day. And then on day forty-one our shepherd boy is running errands. He’s bringing food to his brothers. And he goes to the front line and he’s talking to his brothers. And it says—note that this is maybe the smallest person in this entire battle, this little seventeen-

year-old. I mean, he doesn't have to be small. He's not a boy, he's seventeen. He's talking with his brothers, and it says that Goliath came out for his usual defiance. And after hearing those taunts, David—the first time he hears it, he wants to put a stop to it immediately. He says this: “And David asked the men standing near him, ‘What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?’” *What happens to the guy who shuts this guy up who is making fun of our God?*

He calls him an “uncircumcised Philistine” for a purpose. It's recalling the covenant, the promise, that Yahweh, Jehovah God, gave Israel. *This is your land. I'm giving it to you—I promise.* And so, this is where the circumcised people here live. It's like, *You're on our dirt, and you make fun of our God?*

And so, his brother, Eliab, the oldest one, looks at him and then makes fun of him. He's angry—clearly he's enraged—because cowards hate heroes showing up when everyone else is taking the stance, *Okay, learn to like the stand. You'll get used to it.* And he says, “What are you doing here? Aren't you supposed to be tending those little sheep back home? I know how wicked your heart is,” he says. “You just came here to see the blood and the gore of battle.”

And David says, “Hey, I'm just asking questions here.” But I love what it says: “And he turned away from Eliab.” Because this hero has almost zero tolerance for cowards. He's not a boy anymore. *I'm going to talk to someone else and ask around. What's going to happen to the man who gets rid of this loudmouth who's heckling Israel and mocking our God?*

Saul is doing just what Saul does. He's not going to fight him, but he's promised great wealth to that man who does. He's going to give that man one of his daughters in marriage. And that man will be tax-free for the rest of his life. And David must think, *Wow, okay. Who do I talk to?* Next thing you know he's in the presence of Saul himself.

Saul hears about this young shepherd boy wanting to take on the battle. When David meets Saul, he says, “Let no one lose heart because of this Philistine. I will fight him.” That's what it says in Hebrew. A Greek translation of the Old Testament (called the Septuagint), and in that translation—it's common, even in our own English translations—that there's a little bit of commentary added. And in that Greek translation, it says, “Let not the king lose heart,” because that's who the audience is. This king who's the biggest man and it was his fight to fight—“Let not the king lose heart. I'll fight the Philistine for you.”

1 Samuel 17:33

Saul replied, “You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a boy, and he has been a fighting man from his youth.”

And Saul responds—listen to what he puts his faith in—“But you’re not able to go out against the Philistine and fight him. You’re only a boy. And he’s been a fighting man since his youth.” Saul is putting his courage, his strength, his faith, in size, weaponry, and experience. *And David, you have none of that.*

If it were today, it would be like if he came to our church, we would say, “David, what’s your spiritual gift and how are you using it for the kingdom of God.?”

And David would say, “I’m really good with rocks, and I kill what other people fear.”

“Oh, okay.”

1 Samuel 17:34-37

But David said to Saul, “Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, ³⁵ I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. ³⁶ Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defiled the armies of the living God. ³⁷ The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”

So, here’s the answer. Picture this. They’re in a tent. We have the largest man in Israel, the king, and his generals. This is David’s response to *Hey, you have no war history*. “And David said to Saul, ‘Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep.’” Yeah, you’re supposed to laugh. *Wait, what? You’ve been keeping sheep—that’s your answer?—your father’s sheep.*

Listen to the faith that David has. Here’s the key: you have to have real courage. Real courage comes from real faith in the Lord. This is where David puts his faith. It’s graphic. And

when he's shepherding sheep (he continues)—look what he's boasting in. “When a lion or bear came and they carried off a sheep from the flock I went after it and I struck it and I rescued the sheep from its mouth. Now when it turned on me I seized it by the hair and I struck it and I killed it. So look, your servant has killed both a lion and a bear. This uncircumcised Philistine will look like one of them because he has defiled the army of the living God. For Jehovah, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the paw of this Philistine.”

How Do You Kill a Giant?

1. Get Courage from the Right Source of Faith

There it is. There's where his faith is. That's why he has the courage that he has. And his courage can overwhelm any odds against him. Do you want to know how to kill a giant? Yeah, right?—you do. Here's the first thing: you have to get courage from the right source of faith. It's faith in God. What everybody else sees—and that's why the narrator writes it that way with all those details—is because everybody else sees this giant, hulking man with all of this equipment and technology. And David sees a tiny little man making fun of the God of Israel. He knows and enjoys Jehovah, who is overflowing with love and brings justice and righteousness to the Valley of Elah. He gives Jehovah the credit: *He gave me victory over that lion, victory over that bear. He's going to give me victory over this Philistine.*

I mean, know this, right? David is an exceptional athlete. He's a phenom. He's a marksman. No doubt about that. He's practiced with that, he's taken ten thousand reps, he's good. But that's not what he's bragging about. That's not what he's trusting in. And it would be like you and me driving to an interview for a job, say. Sure, we do the homework. We practice. We ask for advice on how to do an interview well. And maybe we're quite good at interviewing. But in route there we're saying, “Lord, this is bigger than me and my talents. I'm not trusting in that anyway. I'm trusting in You and Your providence and Your sovereignty. You're part of all of this. You got me this interview. You're going to determine how this person's going to receive this interview. So, I'll do my part, but that's it. My faith, hope, trust, is not in my skills, not in my experiences.”

And I think, for me, one of the reasons that I must stay intimate with God is because I fall back on either working hard or trying to out-think stuff. And there have been a few times in my life when, because I was intimate with God, I felt like the Spirit was saying, “Matt, you’re trusting in more hours. You need to close the book. You’ve studied enough. Go home. You have other responsibilities. You’re putting your hope and faith in working harder and learning more.”

And when I’m not tuned into the Spirit of God I default to those two right away.

2. Remember the Right Stories

You want to kill a giant? One, you’ve got to change the source of where your faith is so that you get the real courage that’s diamond hard. Two, you have to remember well. You have to remember the right stories. *It was God who killed that lion, it was God who killed that bear, and it’s God that’s going to do this. And this is how I keep score. This is how I remember my life.*

What I love about David is that there’s a sense of destiny about him. Every single one of us should understand a sense of destiny about how we are here for this very purpose—right here, right now. If there was a better time or a better place, God would have put you there. This is it, right here, right now.

And David understands. He’s remembering when he’s a boy, when he was a shepherd, and all of that was orchestrated to trust God in new ways; to kill these animals so that maybe it turns into something else later. How we remember is key to living by faith.

Some saints have very short memories. It has been well said that we write our benefits in dust and our injuries in marble, and it is equally true that we generally inscribe our afflictions upon brass, while the records of the deliverances of God are written in water.

---Charles Spurgeon

I like how Spurgeon sometimes reminds us that we don’t remember well often. Here’s what Pastor Spurgeon said: “Some saints have very short memories. It has been well said that we write our benefits in dust and our injuries in marble. It’s equally true that we generally inscribe our afflictions upon brass and we record our deliverances with God in water.”

Right. We carve in stone the one time we trusted in God in big ways and we failed miserably. But the seven times we have a God story, we write those in a cloud. The key to living by faith is remembering well, knowing what to remember and how to remember it.

Do you want to raise a giant killer? As parents, do you want to raise little giant killers? You show them that this first part of the destiny of their life, that God is working in their lives, even in elementary school and at junior high and high school, is bringing little lions and little bears and letting them trust in the Lord and not their own strength and wisdom or wealth. And they just keep graduating from that. And then you're teaching them to remember those things. You're giving them a plaque or some kind of icon to help them remember the time that the Lord delivered them in that grade. And when they get older, a little more. They go off and they leave the house and they have God stories in their lineage, in their memory, constantly remembering what God has done. You have to teach them how to fight giants—the ones that God brings them—and then you have to teach them how to remember those. And that's how you breed and raise giant-killers.

The story continues, where Saul does what you would expect Saul to do. He tells David to try on his coat of armor, his bronze helmet, using his spear. And why is that? Because Saul is just working down his list from Jeremiah: "Let not the strong man boast in his strength." That's where he was. And then Goliath showed up and he was stronger. Okay, how about the wealthy man? *Yeah, sure, I'm going to write checks. I'm going to throw money at it. You'll be rich and you won't be taxed, and I'll even throw my daughter in there too.* And now it's wisdom—the wisdom or technology of my armory. You can use that. And David tries it on and turns it down, because he's not putting his faith in those things.

I would love to know if he turned to Saul and said, "How is all this military equipment working for you? I mean, it's yours, right? Why aren't you wearing it?" He doesn't have a lot of patience for cowards. So, David takes his staff and starts to lead. And the last words that Saul says to him before he leaves is, "Go, and may Jehovah be with you." Really ... okay.

The Fight

So, here's the story. *In this corner, fighting out of Gath, nine feet and plus inches, weighing over 400 pounds, covered in about 222 pounds of the best technology the military can*

provide, with a fighting record of 127 victories, all by death, and zero losses. He is Goliath, the terror.

And in this corner, from the little town of Bethlehem, a teenage shepherd boy. And I can see that you brought you ... oh, you brought your shepherd staff. Good. And he's never fought. What'd you say? You killed two animals? That's cute, that's good ... two animals. David, the baby-faced shepherd! That's what we're supposed to see.

And while all of this is happening, Israel is beginning to panic. Some of the men are literally fleeing. Goliath is putting his chest out like it's an easy victory. Saul is very nervous and terrified. David's brothers are mocking him still. Through all of this, David is unmoved. He goes to the stream in the valley there and picks up five smooth stones. And it says that he puts them in the pocket of his shepherd's pouch. And then in verse 40—we are forty verses in, and then the author says, “And he took his sling towards Goliath.” Wait, what? He's got a what? He's got a sling? No one has mentioned a sling. Yeah, maybe it will come up later.

Goliath sees him and it says that he despised David. And he despised him because he was a boy and ruddy and handsome. And he says, “Am I a dog that you come to me with sticks?” And now they're going to exchange trash-talking speeches, and there's going to be more time spent on the speeches there will be on the fight, because this is where we learn how to kill giants in our lives.

Goliath says, *Look, little boy. I'm going to take your carcass and I'm going to feed it to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field. You're wasting my time here.*

1 Samuel 17:45

David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.”

And then David responds this way. “And David said to the Philistine, ‘You come against me boasting about a sword and a spear and a javelin. And I come against you in the name of Jehovah the Almighty, the God of the armies, whom you have defiled.’ *This is what's going to happen. The Lord is going to give you into my hands. I'm going to kill you. Then I'm going to*

chop your head off. And then ... yeah... the beasts of the fields and the birds of the air are going to feast on the carcasses of all the Philistines as we chase you all the way back to Gath.

1 Samuel 17:46b-47

“... and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. ⁴⁷ All those gathered here will know that is it not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord’s.

Okay ... there’s that. And this is going to happen for the world to know. It says, “And the world will know that there’s a God in Israel. And all those who gather here will know that it’s not by sword or spirit that Jehovah saves; the battle belongs to Jehovah.” *We’re not going to boast in the sword of the spear. We’re not going to hope in wisdom, we’re not going to hope in wealth, we’re not going to hope in power. This is what it looks like. We’re going to hope in the Lord.*



And the Goliath took two lumbering steps towards David. David ran to the giant, picked up one of his stones from his pouch, slings it, throws it at the giant, hits him right in the forehead. It sinks into his skull. And then Goliath falls forward face down. Tim—ber! The bigger they are ... That stupid giant. He has faith in the sword and spear and javelins. Who brings a spear to a gun fight?

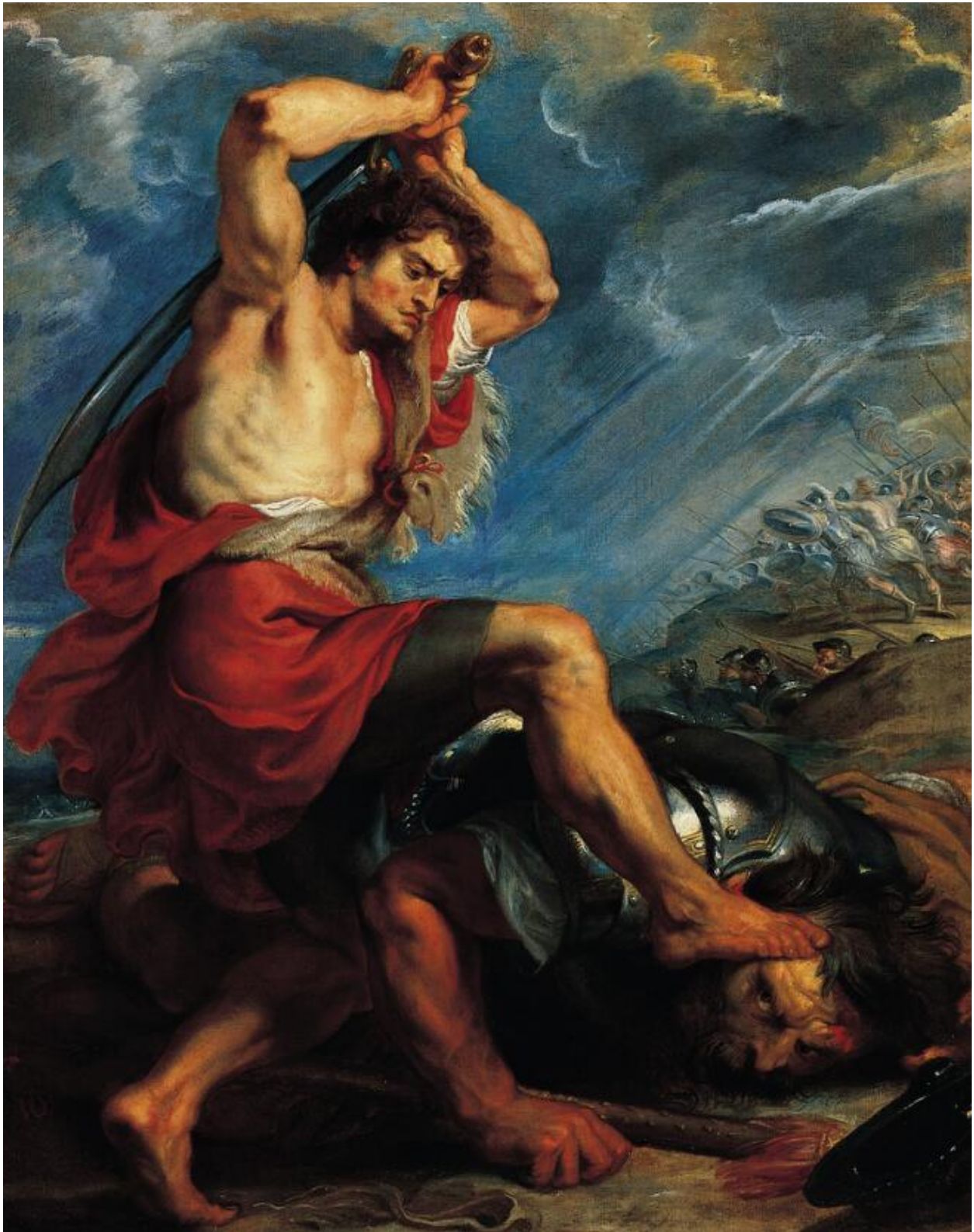


1 Samuel 17:50

So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him.

Look what it says: “And David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone”—without a sword in his hand—“And he struck down the Philistine and killed him.” So, David ran over to him and he did what he promised he would do. He’s not quite dead yet. He takes the sword out of the scabbard of Goliath because he didn’t have time to pull it out himself. He kills Goliath with it, cuts his head off, holds it up the crowd. The Philistines panic, and sure enough,

the Israelites chase them all the way back to the gates of Gath, killing them and leaving their carcasses for the beasts of the field and the birds of the air, just like they would say.



Do you want to kill a giant, anybody? Anybody want to kill a giant? You've got to have the courage that's from the Lord. Boast in this, have faith in this, trust in this: that Jehovah is everlasting in His love and will bring righteousness and justice to this earth. He is the promise keeper. His words will never fail. Trust and faith in Jehovah to bring about real courage. That real courage can have you go and figure out how to make your marriage right. Real courage can give you the power to find out what motivates you deep down inside. True courage—not the fake kind—when you're trusting in the Lord, He can give you the courage to face the problems with addiction or take responsibilities for some decisions that you made where you hurt other people and you don't want to feel the courage of responsibility. This courage can help there—courage from the Lord.

And then there's choosing to remember life that way—choosing to remember what God has done. Every single one of us needs to have a sense of destiny about our lives; that God has been working all in our lives to bring us to more courageous opportunities, more courageous events where we can have God stories. Did you notice that every one of the losers in this story mocks David for the very thing that God used to make him a giant killer—being a shepherd boy? He's banished to the hills where he's bored to death, and he learns how to use a sling like a sniper rifle. And it is in that disgraceful act of being the young shepherd boy that he kills this giant, and his brother mocks him for it, and the king mocks him for it, and Goliath mocks him for it. And David responds with, "God is working in my life. His hand is upon me and His sovereignty is working in my life, so that I might understand and know how God works, for such a time as this." We all are supposed to have an overwhelming sense of destiny. God is doing things right now to make us with the right kind of courage and the right kind of trust, to slay giants now and in the future.

Any warriors in the house? Are you just tired of sand getting kicked in your face, every morning and every afternoon? Change your courage by changing the source of where your faith is. Change who and how you boast. Let's build a church of warriors. What do you say? Let's raise up a generation of giant killers.

Aftermath of a Giant Killing

I love this story. You know, let me tell you what happens after the giant killing. It doesn't make it to the cartoons. Saul is watching from his perch at a safe distance from the battle, and

says, “Who is this kid again? Bring him to me.” So, Abner is the general, and he brings David into his presence, and David, it says, shows up to Saul with Goliath’s head. He’s got his head in one hand and Goliath’s sword in the other. The whole point is that big, tall, strong King Saul is here, and now the shepherd boy is back. *Was this who you were having trouble with? You got any other problems for the shepherd boy? Because I’ve got four more stones.*

Then, part two of the aftermath: David walks five and a half hours back towards home, carrying the head of Goliath and that sword. And he deviates to Jerusalem, five miles north of his little town of Bethlehem. And Bethlehem, topographically, is below it. And he looks up at Jerusalem every day when he’s tending sheep, and he wants that town to be owned by the glory of God. He knows that town belongs to Jehovah. So, he brings the head of Goliath to Jerusalem and leaves it there as a seventeen-year-old boy. And he said it first: “I’ll be back.” And he’ll make that the capital of Israel one day.

Then he goes back home to shepherding. He brings the sword into his tent where there’s a bearskin rug, and he mounts it up on his wall right next to that lion head. But this is a different David. Because this changes everything. I’ll quote from King Arthur: “And fate leads Arthur to pull the Excalibur from the stone so that he might embrace his true destiny as a legendary fighter and a leader.” That’s what’s happened in David’s life. He’s pulled Excalibur. And that boy who left those fields at the beginning of the story will never come back. Because now David the warrior, the king elect, the man after God’s own heart, is the storyline from this time forward.

Come back next week and we’ll learn some more.

Is there anybody in the house that wants to kill a giant? Yeah. Let’s make ourselves giant-killers.

Lord Jesus, I’d ask that Your Spirit would help us understand that You’ve cut us to the quick. When we put our faith in things that are temporary, that can be lost, that can just grow old; when we have our identity in maybe our appearance or our wealth or our intelligence or our work ethic, whatever it might be; we run with confidence—I mean pride. And these things come into our lives and we become angry and afraid. And they’re all allowed by You and Your providence as another giant to kill so that we’ll have still another God story to glorify Jehovah with.

So, Lord, I'd ask that You would bring this to our minds and help us realize where we're putting our faith, our trust, what we boast about. And I confess that it is sinful when we put our faith and trust and hope and we boast about ourselves and our attributes and gifts that You've given us.

Lord, let us be a church of giant-killers that raise giant-killers, because we know that You are Jehovah God, the Lord of all the armies. And You've given us these giants just to mount on the walls of eternity, just to tell stories in future lives together about how You've worked in us to overcome the things that we fear. We pray this in great hope and trust in the nature of Your overflowing love, and we pray that You will bring justice and righteousness to this earth. That's what we boast about. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.