

David and Goliath

Judges ends, “there was no king in Israel”. When will a king come? Well, in 1 Sam., Israel selects a king for themselves, a guy named Saul. But we’re told that God selects someone else to be king. He send the prophet Samuel to a guy named Jesse who assembles all of his sons for Samuel. And Samuel looks at all of them and says, “Nope” got any more? Yes one he’s a shepherd... Now David was the youngest of 8 brothers, so needless to say they weren’t thrilled about his selection as king. He tended the sheep, he played the harp, the text says he was “ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome.” But his beauty didn’t get him a lot of street cred. He was a young little pretty boy band teenager. Not the fierce warrior you might think of. Nevertheless, empowers him to be an exceptional warrior and tonight we’re looking at the first battle of his military career. And I want us to look at this story and see a God who goes before us, fights our battles, and gains incredible victory. If you struggle with worry and anxiety tonight is for you. If you struggle with sin habits, tonight is for you. If you struggle to see how God makes a meaningful difference in your daily life, tonight’s for you. If you need encouragement and wisdom in fighting life’s battles, tonight’s for you. So let’s look at the text together...

“1 Now the Philistines drew up for battle” 2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered, and encamped in zthe Valley of Elah, and drew up in line of battle against the Philistines. “3 And the Philistines stood on the mountain on one said, and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with a valley in between.” Show pic. About a mile across.

“4 And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.” This mean he was 9’9 or perhaps 6’9, but still huge. “He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. (80-125 lbs) 6 And he had bronze armor on his legs, and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. 7 The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six

hundred shekels of iron. And his shield-bearer went before him. Little guy up front! Never heard of him!

“8 He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, “Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not

a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me.

9 If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and

kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us.” 10 And the Philistine said, “I defy the ranks of Israel

this day. Give me a man, that we may fight together.” 11 When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the

Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.” The text calls Goliath a champion. He wasn’t like all

state or something. He fought on behalf of his people. What we see here is the idea of representative

warfare. It was in the Ancient World. It was where the best fighters from each army fought. Their victory

represented a victory for their people. And Goliath comes out (vs 16 says for 40 days) each morning and

taunts them and no one goes out to fight. This is absolutely humiliating. And remember, military victories

always have theological significance. It looks really bad for Yahweh.

Meanwhile, David is back at home taking care of the sheep and his father asks him to take some snacks to

his brothers who are with the army. So David finds someone to take care of the sheep, and delivers the

goodies. And runs to the battle lines to greet his brothers who are lined up for battle, “ 23 As he talked

with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the

Philistines and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him.

24 All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were much afraid. 25 And the men of

Israel said, “Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel. And the king

will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's

house free in Israel.” 26 And David said to the men who stood by him, “What shall be done for the man

who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine,

that he should defy the armies of the living God?” 27 And the people answered him in the same way, z“So shall it be done to the man who kills him.” So right in the middle of the convo Goliath comes out...It’s here that we begin to see that David is what the Bible will call a man after god’s own heart. A king who truly loves and trusts the Lord. And we see that David is blown away that someone has the audacity to defy God and God’s people. Right here you can see that he has tremendous concern for the name and glory of God which is going to play a huge part in his fight against Goliath. And he learns that the king has promised to give him money, his daughter, and free his household which mean they didn’t pay taxes. Now it’s at this point where you can see David start to consider fighting this guy, but just as he does, his oldest brother, comes in with some negativity, “28 Now Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke to the men. And Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, “Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your presumption and the evil of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.” 29 And David said, “What have I done now? Was it not but a word?” 30 And he turned away from him toward another, and spoke bin the same way, and the people answered him again as before.” He’s saying, whatever, you don’t care about God’s glory, you were just hoping to see some action. He’s still bitter than he didn’t get chosen to be king and that his little brother did and he can’t stand the thought that his little pretty boy harp playing brother might display the kind of heroic faith that he should have had. So he shames him. And then so does everyone else he talks to. But Go promised them the land! He promised to be with them! David is only expressing the kind of faith in god that Israel should have, but doesn’t. He expressing the concern for God’s glory that Israel should have, but doesn’t. And the people of God are opposing him. Don’t miss this: opposition to David’s faith doesn’t come from the Philistines. It comes from the people of God. The one’s bringing him down and

shaming him are the ones claiming to trust in God. One pastor said, "Sometimes you have to deal with the midgets in your own camp before you can defeat the giants in the other camp." And it's true. And what we'll see is that just as much as this is about David and Goliath, it's about the faith of David vs. the unbelief of Israel.

Ravenhill Quote: "One of these days some simple soul will pick up the book of God, read it, and believe it. Then the rest of us will be embarrassed."

Fortunately David cares more about what God thinks than about what his brothers think and decides he's going to fight the champ. And King Saul hears about this...that there's someone willing to fight for Israel...

And so Saul gets word that David has called him over and, 32 And David said to Saul, c"Let no man's heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." 33 And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth." 34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, 35 I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him. 36 Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God." 37 And David said, f"The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you 38 Then Saul clothed David with his armor!"

A few things to notice here. Saul was the leader. The most experienced warrior and was bigger than everyone else in Israel. He should have been the one to fight for his people. He should be the one out there, but no he's scared, and he instead of fighting he's auctioning off his daughter to the man who has the courage to go. He's failed lead, provide, and protect like he's supposed to do. And thankfully because

of David's trust in God's faithfulness and power, he's going to win extraordinary victory, despite having a failure for a king. What we see here is that the failure of others doesn't prevent me from becoming everything God has called me to be. Listen, I am so aware than many people and in your school, friend group, and in this room, have been let down by people who were supposed to lead, provide, and protect but didn't. And I would hate for anyone to think that because of someone else's failure there life is destined to be second class and damaged. But it's not true...Faith in a God who will never fail you always wins against the sin of the people who did. Because your life is not define by what others have done to you but what Christ has done for you. That despite the failure of Saul, despite the failure of other in your life, there was a king who was faithful and did fight your battle for you and he says in Mt. 6:33 that no matter what circumstances you come from or find yourself in if you will seek first my kingdom and my righteousness...I'll take care of the rest. I'll fight for you, provide for you, care for you, and cause your life to win battles count for my glory in a way that you never thought it could. And so be encouraged and have faith in an unfailing God in the middle of an always failing world. That the faith we need and that's the faith David had...and we get a really interesting look into how it is that David has such a strong faith... In vs. 33 he and Saul are having a conversation and Saul says , you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth." 34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, 35 I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him. 36 Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God." 37 And David said, "The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." What has been the main setting for the growth and development his faith? David's heroic

moment of faith, is simply the result of thousands of little moments of faith in the pasture. His daily routine. His regular duties. Giant slaying faith is forged in the daily grind of the pasture. It's not built at the big conference or the huge decision or with a special technique. Your day-to-day walk with Christ, the ordinary life of faith is the arena where God trains you to fight giants. And there is no other way.

I was in jail and someone asked me about anger and I'm paraphrasing here, "I'm hot, I'm tired, people annoy me, how can I not get mad tomorrow?" You can't. You haven't been trained in the pasture. It's thousands of quiet times, hundreds of worship services and sermons, thousands of conversations, thousands of hours of prayer, thousands of praise and worship songs, thousands of moments responding in anger and asking for forgiveness, thousands of moments asking for wisdom, thousands of moments trusting when you don't know how things are going to turn out... a thousand little moments of faith in your boring day-to-day life. And there is no other way. And so many people think that there is a lifehack to Christianity where you can skip the thousands of boring everyday hours in the pasture and still have a powerful faith. Like you can skip all that and go to a conference, read a few books, and learn a few new techniques and have the same relationship with God as the girl who does her quiet time every morning enjoys. But you can't. Giant slaying faith is built by thousands of hours in the pasture. It's built by coming home after an exhausting day and asking God to give you the strength to put others' comfort in front of yours. It's built by honoring your parents even when you disagree with them because you believe God honors obedience. It's built by hearing the bad decision someone made this weekend and not sharing it even if it would be entertaining. It's built, by being mistreated and being controlled by Christ enough that you don't have to retweet them or respond in anger. Getting up early to get in the word. Thousands of those moments is what makes giant slaying faith. I love that he doesn't even use Saul's armor. He takes it off because it's too big, and what does he use?

The tools
 he's been trained with in the pasture look...
 40 Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the brook and put them in his shepherd's pouch. His sling was in his hand, and he approached the Philistine. 41 And the Philistine moved forward and came near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. 42 And when the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. Goliath is insulted because they sent a teenager who looks like he's in a boy band. And he doesn't even have a sword or spear.
 43 And the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field." 45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46 This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, 47 and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand." Look at the unbelievable faith of this shepherd. He has absolutely no fear. Why? He knows he's not going to die because God has said that he's going to be king. And he believes God's promise. That's the secret to his courage! His confidence has nothing to do with his abilities. Everything to do with God's promises. That's why David isn't being cocky here. Cockiness says I'll be ok bc my strength and abilities are enough. Confidence says, I'll be ok because God and his promises are enough. And I want you to have that kind of confidence and courage. What if you woke up tomorrow and you had a confidence and sense of worth that didn't depend on your abilities and achievements. Sounds like freedom doesn't it. It's yours in Christ!

48 When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. 49 And David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground.⁵⁰ So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. There was no sword in the hand of David. 51 Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. 52 And the men of Israel and Judah rose with a shout and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath⁶ and the gates of Ekron, so that the wounded Philistines fell on the way from Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron. 53 And the people of Israel came back from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their camp. 54 And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent. This is a flawless victory. Untouched, David puts this dude down and then cuts his head off with his own sword. And something very interesting happens... “the men of Israel and Judah—the men who were afraid day after day, unwilling to fight, scared to death—rose with a shout and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath and the gates of Ekron.”

What gives Israel the courage to go in to battle? They’ve been paralyzed with and unbelief for 40 days now. What gives them the courage to suddenly fight? Answering this question is absolutely crucial for the text to make a real difference in your life. They had a champion who did for them what they couldn’t do for themselves. They had a substitute who fought in their place, a shepherd-king, who succeeded where they had failed. The picture we see here of Israel is a people who are helpless and powerless because of their unbelief. We see a picture of ourselves. Too often, we look at this story and think that we are David, but we’re not. We’re Israel. Unbelieving faithless Israel. Whose only hope is in a champion. Stepping up for us.

Doing what we should have done. Trusting God like we should have trusted God. Wins the victory that we couldn't win because our sin and unbelief and winning the victory takes away our shame. And when they see that the victory is there's and their shame is gone, they have the power and courage to charge the battlefield. That's why they finally go into battle. And friends, you and I have a better champion. The Son David. The true shepherd-king, who sees us in our sin, shame, and unbelief and knows that we don't have what it takes to conquer it. And comes from heaven to stand before us and defeat the enemy of sin and death that they couldn't defeat. And because of his victory, our shame is removed and our hope is secure. He's says that he's overcome the world (John 16) He says he's bound the strong man (Mt. 24) He says all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him (Mt. 28) and he says that the gates of hell will not prevail against his people (Mt. 16). Which means this friends... Our victory is guaranteed. (1 Cor.15:54-58) Because Jesus defeated sin and death, we also can fight sin and ultimately conquer death through Christ. Because Jesus won the war, we can win the battles. It's only natural to look at David and Goliath and draw some sort of comparison between Israel fighting Goliath and us facing our giants. And I see people look at this text and say, "Well, David killing Goliath means that because I have God on my side I can make an A on this really hard test, or beat this really good team, or get this good job." But friends we have to realize what Jesus realized...that giants that threaten to kill you and destroy your friendships and relationships and take your joy us are not outside of us but inside of us. The giants we face are not primarily our circumstances, but our sin and unbelief. Your sin is what makes you miserable. No one has made me more miserable in my life than me. Your selfishness is what prevents you from putting others first. Your need for other's approval is what makes your worried all the time. Your love for yourself makes you impatient. Your love of the world is why your feelings for God are cold. That's

the giant—our true enemy—that Jesus defeated and gives us power over. And as David's victory empowered Israel to slay the Philistines, so Christ's victory empowers me to slay my sin. It doesn't mean I'll get the scholarship if I try my best. It means that whether I have a scholarship or not, I can sleep fine at night bc I have a hope that doesn't depend on career success and the humility to be happy for someone else when they get it. It doesn't mean that people will love and respect me. It means that when they don't love you, you'll have the power to love them and treat them with gentleness and grace. It doesn't mean that the nerdy guy will get the hot girl. It means that whether I'm single or dating, that my joy doesn't rest in the warmth of romance and that I have a sense of value and worth that doesn't depend on someone else's approval. It means that I can put my pride to death, conquer my selfishness, fight my lust, calm my worry and anxiety about the future, think of others first, hate my sin, love Christ's glory and live for his kingdom rather than my own comfort convenience and achievements. That is your biggest need. And that's what Jesus died for.