

1 Samuel 17:31-54 - David and Goliath - Part 2

Well, we are here again in what is one of the most well-known Bible stories of all time: David and Goliath. The young shepherd boy from nowhere slaughtering the biggest, baddest warrior we have recorded in the Bible. I mean, we usually think of David as just killing Goliath with a stone - and he did. But then he cut off his head with Goliath's own sword, took his armor and sword for himself and brought Goliath's head to Jerusalem. You're probably not going to see that in children's coloring books.

Why is this story here? Aside from being an awesome story? I mentioned last week it's here for really 2 reasons. It's here to show us that king Saul is completely unqualified to be the king of Israel. Saul is a coward who fails his people in their most desperate hour. What Israel needs is a true king - a warrior - after God's heart, and David proves himself for that task in this one event.

The second reason this is here, I believe, is as a type of Christ. This battle between David and Goliath serves as a foreshadowing of Jesus the anointed king of Israel from Bethlehem defeating Satan, saving his people, winning a bride, and earning the praise of the people of God.

So as we went through the first 3 of 6 sections last week, I sort of zoomed in and out between the immediate story here as well as the bigger picture of our salvation through Jesus. And we'll continue that again this morning.

We've seen Goliath the dragon, David the unassuming savior, the fearful Israelites.

4) The cowardly king **Read 31-37**

So David's causing a stir among the troops. They feel outraged and shamed because he says he'll fight the giant. And if it were any other kid the king would probably dismiss him outright. But people know that David has been in Saul's household. And, of course, Saul knows David so he sends for him to see what's really going on.

And remember Saul loves David. David is not some strange kid. He's part of the royal household and ministers to Saul through music in a very important way. To some extent he has spiritual influence in Saul's life.

And he comes to Saul and has to assure the king he's not playing around. He really will go out and kill the Philistine.

Saul's objection, of course, is nonsense. "Goliath has been a warrior since he was a kid, and you're just a kid." Well, when does someone start fighting in battle? And if Goliath fought when he was a kid why can't David. If you remember from last week, soldiers in Israel had to be 20 years old, so we know David was not yet 20 when all of this took place. But David wasn't afraid to fight.

In fact, he basically gives a battle resume to Saul. **Read 34-36**

Now, I don't know about you, but if I were out tending sheep and knew there were lions and bears in the area - and there were those in David's time in Israel - I'd probably have a .300 Winchester Magnum, a 12 gauge, and a .45 Auto on me at all times. And there's no chance I'd let my teenage son watch the sheep all by himself. And if they took a lamb, well, that's a bummer.

David? No David is the good shepherd. He's the shepherd in Jesus' parable who leaves the 99 sheep and goes and gets the one who is lost. He's the good shepherd who is willing to lay down his life for any of his sheep. He says he went to rescue a lamb. The smallest and weakest. If one of those animals took the sheep he went and brought deliverance - salvation - for the sheep.

He chases lions and bears. And if they don't give up the lamb on the first strike, he slaughters them. He'll take them by the beard and cut off their head.

I just read something that a man was attacked by an 1-year-old mountain lion recently and was able to basically strangle it to death. That's pretty impressive because mountain lion isn't like human muscle. Big cat muscle is several times stronger, pound-for-pound, than human muscle. That's pretty rare for someone to do - most of us would want to be armed.

And we're probably not ever going to do that to a regular lion, an certainly not one that has been wounded. And we're not going to do it multiple times. David says lions and bears. This happened all the time. If we killed one lion with a sword it'd be the story we told everyone until the people at the retirement home couldn't stand it anymore. For David, this was just Tuesday.

And for David there was no difference between those unclean animals, and this filthy, uncircumcised beast who was defying God. They're all the same. Saul says, "Go get 'em." **Read 38-40**

Just sit back and think about that for a minute. Here's a teenage boy who's brave enough to go against a warrior that none of the other soldiers or the king is willing to take on. There should be some shame in Saul's heart right now. This kid - sorry, teenagers you're kids until you're like 30 - this kid is going into battle. Sometimes I'm at the gym and see some teenage kid going all out and I think, "Yeah, I should probably do a few more sit-ups." I'm also getting to the age now when I'm older than most pro athletes and think about the same thing. I should be able to do more than what I'm doing.

Saul is a warrior-king. Why is he letting a kid go out and fight his battles? Why doesn't he go with him? Either he's scared or he thinks it's a suicide mission or he's having fun with David at the cost of his life. I think it's probably just that he's scared and David doesn't even know what fear is.

Here's something interesting about Saul giving David his armor. We usually talk about how these weren't the weapons David was familiar with, they weren't tried, they were too big for David. And just like David used the skills God had equipped him with, we need to use the skills God has equipped us with. Again, that's okay. But step back for a minute and think about this scene as though you're another soldier.

Here's this kid over talking with the king. There's some back and forth. And then the king takes all his royal armor and weaponry off and places it on the kid. What just happened there? Saul has made David the de facto king. When Saul puts his armor on David he's basically saying, "Here, you go be king for me." All of Israel's army is watching Saul abdicate his position of authority and essentially crown David king. And then what's David do? He goes out and slaughters the giant. He's dressed as a king and then goes and does what a king should do.

You remember in the book of Esther when wicked Haman comes to the king at night to tell him about Mordecai the Jew? Mordecai won't bow down to Haman so Haman wants to kill him. So he goes to the king to see about killing Mordecai and before he speaks the king asks Haman, "Hey, what would you do to honor a person in a big way?" And Haman thinks the king wants to honor him. So he says, "You put the king's robes on him, and the king's crown and have the guy ride on the king's horse, and have someone proclaim how great this person is." Again, he thinks the king is going to honor *him*. But the king says, "Okay, Haman, you go do that for Mordecai who saved my life. Make sure you do it all." And Haman is humiliated while Mordecai is exalted. **(Esther 6:1-13)**

That's what Saul is unwittingly doing. He's not giving David just anyone's armor. He could have grabbed some random armor and sword laying around. He could have told one of the smaller soldiers to give up their equipment for David. But gives him his equipment. And unwittingly crowns David king.

The only thing more amazing than that, is that David takes it all off. Again, imagine you're watching this as an Israelite soldier. You can't hear anything but you watch this whole thing go down. The king gives all his armor to David and then David rejects it. Takes it all back off and does his own thing. He rejects Saul's armor. He can't use it. He doesn't fight like Saul fights.

Shepherd's aren't out in the country with helmets and breastplates all kinds of stuff just waiting for danger to come around. They've got a staff, maybe a sword and a sling, and that's about it. And that's how David killed the lions and the bears. Now is not the time to play around with new stuff.

One other note on **Vs. 40. Read**

I mentioned last week that the point of this passage isn't that we should find our Goliaths in life and get 5 smooth stones to defeat our Goliaths. It's not that that's evil, it's just not the best understanding of the passage.

What I want to point out is that a sling and stones were considered powerful weapons in Israel at the time. If you remember, toward the end of the book of Judges there was a civil war between the tribe of Benjamin and all the rest of the tribes of Israel. Benjamin was completely outnumbered, almost 20:1. But Benjamin ended up winning several of the initial battles. One of the key components to Benjamin's army that is mentioned are 700 men that were left-handed, who could sling a stone at a hair and not miss (**Judges 20:16**). Left handed warriors had an advantage because the angle of attack was slightly different than what soldiers were used to. And they were throwing stones about the size of tennis balls so if you didn't shield yourself against them just right they'd do incredible damage.

My father-in-law actually made us some slings to throw tennis balls several years ago. And it's amazing how far and fast you can throw a tennis ball with a sling. You can really hurt someone even with a tennis ball. And, actually, because the tennis ball is so light, you can feel the wind resistance as you wind up to throw it. You realize that with a heavier object you could throw it much harder and much faster.

By the way, all throughout Israel, even today, you can go to these ancient cities and find piles of sling rocks around the city. This was just a common defensive weapon. That's one way we know this wasn't a small pebble, it was a large stone.

So David grabs his shepherd's staff and a handful of stones and he goes and does battle.

Now, permit to make one small application here. David goes into battle with weapons that everyone thinks are worthless. The soldiers of Israel think they are worthless, Saul thinks they're worthless, Goliath is going to mock David for coming at him with a stick. "Do you think I'm a dog and we're going to go play fetch?" Everyone thinks David's skills are useless for the kingdom. But the reality is that David uses what he has and what God has given him for the glory of God in his kingdom.

Listen, there's a lot of times when we look at other people and think their skills and their gifts are either worthless compared to ours, or that we are worthless compared to them. So and so is so generous or thoughtful or creative or a good teacher or good at this or that. All that stuff we read about in 1 Cor. 12 about how the eye says to the foot "I don't need you" and how the ear says to the hand "I'm not like you so what good am I?" Listen, we are simply called to use what God has given us for his glory.

That doesn't mean you can't grow and learn and improve and ask for other gifts. But God has given you precisely what he has for his glory. Most of you know Jim Plunkitt; I remember him telling me early on in ministry "Don't try to be John Piper or John MacArthur or RC Sproul." Just be Jason Upchurch because God has gifted you in your own way. I wasn't trying to be those other guys, but it was good reminder that God gifts people in different ways. And even the most unlikely person can use their gifts for the benefit of the kingdom.

5) The Lord who delivers. Read 41-51a

Now, we'll get to the play-by-play of this battle in just a bit. But this second section I called "The Lord who delivers" and I did that on purpose because really we think of David defeating Goliath, and there's obviously a sense in which that is true. But I think if this were like a football game and we were doing a post game interview with David about the victory who would David say gave the victory? The Lord.

Really, if you think about it, David's concern this whole time with Goliath wasn't even that the people of Israel were threatened with their lives. You know what it was? That the Lord was being blasphemed. Goliath was

blaspheming the Lord, and the cowardice of Saul and the troops basically implied that they didn't truly believe the God of Israel could deliver them. **Read 26, 36-37**

Yahweh's fame and glory is at stake in this battle. The Israelites are bringing reproach upon God because of their cowardice. Whenever the people of God are cowardly we bring reproach upon God. That doesn't mean we can't be afraid of something. Being brave is when you're afraid of something and do it anyway. Cowardice is when you're afraid of something and don't do it.

And did you notice, when David was giving Saul his resume about killing the lions and bears, who gets the credit? God does. David isn't arrogant here. His point is simple: God delivered me then, he'll deliver me again. The whole battle is saturated with God. **Read 45-47**

And what's God do? He gives Goliath into David's hand. It is God who uses his anointed king to bring salvation to his people.

Back in Vs. 41 and 42, as the two warriors approach each other, Goliath realizes David is just a young man. The two warriors could not be more different. First we see 3 things about Goliath: he hates David, he curses David, and he mocks David.

Why does he hate David? **Read 42**

He hates David because he realizes he's just a kid. He thinks the Israelites are playing with him. Sending out a kid into battle. And interestingly, all the physical features we saw in the last chapter that were good and commendable feature about David, Goliath sees them and hates David for them. He was ruddy - sort of a healthy, reddish appearance. And he was handsome.

Goliath also mocks David. What could David's weapons possibly do against this beast of man who is covered in armor and has a shield bearer and a bronze helmet? David is coming at him with a shepherd's staff - a stick. What's he going to do with that? Interestingly, Goliath doesn't see the stones. David's hidden them in his pouch.

Goliath also curses David. It's kind of an interesting thing to think about how other cultures use curses and profanity. We're so used to English. One way we know that Christianity had a deep influence on our culture is that people use God and Jesus as a swear words. No one says, "Mohammed, are you kidding me?" Or "Oh my, Buddah!" No people in America use the Lord's name in cursing because of Christian influence. People elsewhere use other kinds of cursing.

By the way, we should be tipped off here. This Philistine is cursing a son of Abraham. **Gen. 12:3** should ring in our ears when God says to Abraham: Whoever blesses you I will bless and whoever dishonors you I will what? Curse. Even just a minimal knowledge of Genesis would give away that Goliath isn't going to be around for long.

And while Goliath trash talks David, there's sort of a sense in which David trash talks Goliath. And some of the things he says are almost the same. **Read 45-46**

He mentions Goliath's weapons, he curses Goliath by Yahweh - Yahweh will kill Goliath. And he says almost word-for-word what Goliath said about striking him down and giving his dead body to the birds of the air. That was the most dishonoring thing you could do, by the way, in ancient times. Not giving someone a proper burial was the way that you utterly dishonored someone even after they were dead because their bodies would be eaten up by animals.

I don't know if you've noticed over the past few weeks as you've driven down Monroe, but there was a deer killed about a mile up the road toward town. And slowly over the weeks it's been eaten up by animals. And it's gross. I think finally after several weeks all that's left is fur and bones. But it was ugly for a while. Imagine that with a person. That's gross, utterly defiled. David says: "I'm going to do that to you." Not only would Goliath be slaughtered in life, he would be dishonored in death.

You know how the battle goes of course. **Read 48-49**

David slings this tennis ball sized rock precisely into the face of Goliath and his head is instantly crushed. David was like one of those Benjaminites who could sling a stone at a hair and not miss. He doesn't miss here. He hits the only place on the giant's entire body that would have been vulnerable to attack.

The rock goes so fast that it crushes his forehead and sinks into his head. Gruesome. But he's not done. He then takes Goliath's own sword out of his sheath and cuts off his head. Just like Samuel hacked Agag to pieces, David hacks Goliath to pieces. In Jesus' name.

2 Sam. 22:35 / Psa. 18:34: He trains my hands for war; so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.

Psa. 144:1-2: Blessed be the Lord, my rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle; he is my steadfast love and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield and he in whom I take refuge, who subdues peoples under me.

The Lord - through his servant David - is victorious. I'll look at another detail with Goliath's head in a few minutes.

6) The fleeing Philistines. **Read 51b-54**

Isn't it amazing how you're hope can be in one person and then in a single moment they're gone?

The Philistines trusted in Goliath and his sword and spear and javelin. And in a moment he was crushed by a back woods Jewish kid.

And the whole army flees. Israel chases them out of the land killing the stragglers as they go. Once they are secure in their cities, the Israelites turn around and plunder the camp where the Philistines were at. The Israelites then return to Jerusalem, where Goliath's head was put on display. That's gruesome and disgusting, but that's how people celebrated in ancient times. Actually, that's exactly what will happen to Saul and Jonathan later in **1 Sam. 31:8-10** when they are killed in battle. The Philistines will do the exact same thing to them.

But here, David has not only killed the giant, he has proven that he is really the true king of Israel. He is the one who will lead them in battle. He is the one who has given them salvation. Not in a saved from sins kind of way, but in a saved from enemies kind of way.

Turn to Gen. 3:14-15. I want to zoom back just a little bit. Why is there so much vivid detail about what David does to Goliath's head? Goliath who looks and sounds like Satan; David who acts and saves Jesus. Why is there this focus on the head? If you go all the way back to the Garden of Eden, just after Adam and Eve sinned there was a curse placed upon the serpent - Satan - and Eve and Adam. The only thing I want to point out here is the curse of the serpent. **Read 14-15**

So there's a cursing that includes being the lowest of all created things. But there's also a battle that will take place between Eve's offspring and Satan. The apostle John says we're either children of God or children of the devil. You are either a Christian who trusts in Christ, or you are an unbeliever who follows Satan - whether you know it or not.

And there's this battle in **Vs. 15** where God says the offspring of the woman will bruise Satan's head, yet he will crush his heel. What is that all about? What it's all about is a foreshadowing of the death of Christ and the utter destruction of Satan.

If you were to have an injury in one of 2 places - your head or your foot - where would you rather the injury? Probably your foot because the an injury to your head could kill you. That's the idea. Satan will injure Eve's offspring - referring to Jesus. When did he do that? On the cross. There was a sense in which Satan was at

work. Remember, Satan entered into Judas. And Jesus' heel was bruised. He was killed, but he rose from the grave.

Satan on the other hand, will have his head bruised. He will be mortally wounded. Not blinked out of existence, but there will come a day when he is completely defeated. Listen to just 2 passages.

Hebrews 2:14: Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.

On the cross a Satan was dealt a mortal blow. He disarmed, put to open shame, and Jesus triumphed over him (**Col 2:15**)

Romans 16:20: The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

Satan has been dealt the mortal blow. He thought he crushed Jesus on the cross, but he only killed him temporarily. Jesus rose from the dead. His proverbial heel was bruised, but he recovered.

You know what happened to Satan? His head was bruised. And it's a mortal blow. He's been disarmed but he's still causing problems. One day the God of peace will come and crush him, smash him, shatter him. Our greatest enemy - the enemy of our souls will be sent to hell forever. Only then will we have perfect peace.

A lot of things happened on the cross for which we are thankful. Jesus paid for our sins, he made peace with God. But he also rescued us from an enemy we couldn't defeat on our own. Praise God for his deliverance.

Pray