

# DAVID, THE VICTORIOUS KING

**+ SESSION IN A SENTENCE:**

God often wins the victory through unlikely heroes so that all glory goes to Him.

**+ BACKGROUND PASSAGE:**

1 Samuel 17

**+ SETTING:**

When last we saw David, he had been anointed king by Samuel and entered the personal service of King Saul. Today's passage focuses on the contest between David and Goliath. Not many years could have passed between David's anointing and this narrative because he still was not old enough to be considered for service in Saul's army. Some Bible scholars put David's anointing at age 10 to 12 and his battle against Goliath at age 15 to 17. In five years, teenage David had gone from sitting in the field with sheep to facing down the most feared enemy in the land. Growing up is tough!

# DAY 1

## READ:

1 Samuel 17:1-11

## FOCAL PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 17:11

## NOTES

“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” That may be a catchy childhood retort, but it’s false for children as well as adults. Words have power over us that we feel we can’t even control. They shape our identity, they change our outlook, they inflame our emotions, and they break our hearts.

Just consider the following words you may have spoken or heard: “I love you.” “You are beautiful.” “I hate you!” “Leave me alone.” “Who invited you?” “Shut up!” “Will you marry me?” You likely felt surges of happiness, sadness, warmth, or fear as you read those.

So when we imagine words of anger, rage, and defiance flowing loudly out of the mouth of one of the most famous bad guys of all time, we can only imagine how the Israelite army felt. And this wasn’t just playground taunting; this guy was threatening all they knew—he challenged their nation, their army, and their freedom. The Israelite army was there to defend their land, their families, and their independence. Yet when they heard the challenging words of the Philistine, they lost their courage and were left quaking in terror.

If only they had chosen to remember God’s promises, that God had said He would be with them when they called upon Him (Deut. 4:7) and He was the One who would fight their battles and give them victory (Deut. 20:4).

When we find ourselves facing down our biggest fear, we need not lose our courage and dwell in terror, for the God of Israel is our God today. His promises give us hope and courage in every situation.

**What has stolen your courage today? What Scriptures speak to you in this situation?**

# DAY 2

## READ:

1 Samuel 17:12-24

## FOCAL PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 17:16

## NOTES

I'm certainly no warfare expert, but I'm decently sure that a gathered army would rather fight than sit around. Whether you're attacking or defending, you're there to fight, not twiddle your thumbs. So if Saul's army was anything like me, I'm sure they were thinking (and probably saying), "I thought this would be over by now."

I've been there. I wasn't in combat but rather fighting for my sanity—my infant children were terrible sleepers. (Please don't suggest a book or a system; I tried them all.) I had friends whose kids slept through the night at two, three, and four months. At a year, mine were still up several times a night. As I hit the pillow—hard—every night, the only prayer I had the strength to utter was, "Lord, I thought they'd be sleeping by now. Please help them sleep."

We are told that for forty days, both morning and night, Goliath taunted, threatened, and invited anyone to take a stand against him. And every day, the soldiers stood there: arms down, eyes averted, hoping and praying someone else would volunteer. Kid brothers were having to bring food from miles away. Would this ever end?

These fighters weren't the only ones to ask when circumstances would end. Paul wrote to the Corinthian church about the affliction he and his traveling missionary team suffered. It so overwhelmed them that they began to despair about life itself (2 Cor. 1:8).

If you're in a similar situation that you thought would be over by now, just wait. Do not let go of God's promises, His peace, and His hope. He has a perfect plan for that lasting situation, not the least of which is to make you tougher and better able to endure. As Paul said about his situation, the Lord delivered them, and he had a sure hope that the Lord would continue to do so (2 Cor. 1:10).

**Have you given up hope in your lasting trouble? How can you be renewed in your hope for God's deliverance?**

# DAY 3

## READ:

1 Samuel 17:25-33

## FOCAL PASSAGES:

1 Samuel 17:28,33

## NOTES

God had a plan for David, and David was ready to accept the challenge. Too bad the other humans in his life were less than supportive.

“Why did you come here?” “Why did you leave those few sheep?” “You are arrogant.” “You can’t go fight this Philistine.” “You’re just a kid.” Eliab and Saul don’t sound like the supportive, encouraging mentors a teenage boy needs. Instead of helping David hear the voice of God and the voice of truth, they were filling his head with the voice of discouragement and the voice of fear.

David wasn’t alone. Perhaps you felt very clearly that God had called you to a specific purpose, only to hear similar statements from friends and family when you told them your plan: “Sounds too dangerous.” “That doesn’t seem to be financially stable.” “Shouldn’t you finish college first?” These statements likely came from people who know you well, love you, and want the best for your life.

But they didn’t hear God speak to you. God has the reputation for telling some pretty average people to go and do some pretty crazy things: “Leave your land and family and go to the land I will show you.” “Go and lead My people out of slavery.” “Take that unwed pregnant girl as your wife.” We can be certain that their well-meaning friends and family tried to talk them out of obedience too. But if Abraham, Moses, and Joseph could take flying leaps of faith when called by God to do something for His glory, so can we.

Learn to hear the voice of the Lord every day through His Word and Spirit, and practice taking baby steps of faith. Then, when the time comes for doing something that sounds ridiculous to the world, you’ll be able to tune out the negative thoughts because you heard God clearly.

**Has God called you to step out in faith lately? If you obeyed, what was the result?**

# DAY 4

## READ:

1 Samuel 17:34-37

## FOCAL PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 17:34-37

## NOTES

David's testimony to Saul started out quite ordinary, speaking of his job of shepherding his father's sheep. That wasn't abnormal in that setting; plenty of families owned and tended sheep. But when hard times came through that everyday activity—lions or bears, for example—David found that his God gave him what he needed to defend his sheep and carry on in the job he was doing. Was he receiving money? Probably not much. Fame? None for his shepherding skills. But he was doing his duty and trusting God every day.

Most of us can probably relate pretty easily to the shepherd David. We're going about our daily lives, doing the duties we've been given. For some, that's showing up for that 40-hour-a-week job. For others, it's taking care of children or elderly parents. For most of us, it's lots of other things: including laundry, dishes, home repair, car maintenance, family finances, acting household nurse, and more.

For all that we do, morning through night, are we receiving money? Probably not much. Fame? Not likely for those everyday skills. But we wake up every day, do our duty, and trust God to give us what we need in the tough situations: health scares, bullies, more month than money, and beyond.

There are days we're weary from being the faithful, dutiful adult. Others halfheartedly approach their responsibilities and seem to be just fine. But the ones skating through life are not prepared for the Goliaths that they never saw coming. They're not ready to jump in and save the day for our family, friends, church, or spouse.

But you are different; like David, you entrust your duties to the Lord and His glory. So keep working hard, keep following God's path, and keep being dutiful in His calling on your life. He rewards the faithful.

**Where are you tempted to avoid your responsibilities?  
For what might God be preparing you?**

## VOICES from THE CHURCH

"The text calls us not to admire David the man and no more, but to ponder what the Spirit of God may do with one person."<sup>1</sup>

-D. A. Carson

# DAY 5

## READ:

1 Samuel 17:4-7,38-58

## FOCAL PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 17:45

## NOTES



### ESSENTIAL DOCTRINE #56: CHRIST'S EXALTATION

Whereas the death of Christ was the ultimate example of His humiliation, the resurrection of Christ from the dead is the first and glorious example of Christ's exaltation. Christ was exalted when God raised Him from the dead, and Christ was exalted when He ascended to the Father's right hand. He will be exalted by all creation when He returns. All of these aspects work together to magnify the glory and worth of Christ, resulting in the praise of the glory of His grace in rescuing sinners.

Much was made of Goliath's armor, its size and weight, and how he had every weapon of warfare available for hand-to-hand combat for the time in which he lived. David, on the other hand, had confidence not in armor but in his authority, or rather, the authority of his God (1 Sam. 17:45). Though David's sling and stones were valuable battle gear at that point in time, David never gave his weaponry credit for any of his victories against lions, bears, or giants—God's power made him victorious.

The name David used in referring to the Lord is often translated "LORD of hosts," or "LORD of Armies." In Hebrew, the original language, the name reads Yahweh Sabaoth (recall the lyrics of Martin Luther's *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*). Yahweh is the name God used to introduce Himself to Moses in Exodus 3. Sabaoth encompasses anything that goes to war: an army, a host of men, a host of angels, or even the heavenly beings (sun, moon, and stars), or all of creation.

David knew his God had authority over every fighting man and every weapon, as well as every earthly or heavenly power. Perhaps he'd heard the story of Joshua asking for the sun to stand still so the Israelites could be victorious in battle (Josh. 10:12-13), or maybe he remembered how God used locusts, darkness, and hail in convincing Pharaoh to let His people go (Ex. 7-12).

We would be braver too if we believed and internalized who our God really is. Yes, He is loving and forgiving, full of grace and mercy. But He's also all-powerful, all-knowing, and holy beyond anything we can imagine. When we walk in light of who He is, we are better able to trust Him with our steps.

**What attribute of God has stood out to you lately? How will you delve into that attribute more this week?**

# GROUP

NOTES

**POINT 1: The future king arrives as an unlikely hero** (1 Sam. 17:16-17,22-24,32-33).

In a standoff, the Philistine champion Goliath, a \_\_\_\_\_, challenged the Israelites for a one-on-one battle, yet no \_\_\_\_\_ was bold enough to answer.

**?** What are some reasons the people of God succumb to fear rather than step out with boldness?

King Saul should have been leading his army in \_\_\_\_\_, but instead, he needed to be \_\_\_\_\_ by David, a young shepherd.

**?** Under what circumstances were you an encourager like David? A discourager like Saul?

**POINT 2: The future king trusts in the Lord for victory** (1 Sam. 17:34-40).

David quickly acknowledged that the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ him from lions and bears, so he \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord to save him from Goliath.

**?** What is one testimony you have of the Lord's deliverance in your life?

David trusted God to use the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ he was used to. He didn't need to be or act like someone else; David needed to be the person the Lord had made him to be.

## VOICES from THE CHURCH

"The account of David and Goliath vividly pictures the source of the Christian's faith—not our own size, strength, or resources, but the power of Almighty God."<sup>2</sup>

-Henry Blackaby

**POINT 3: The future king wins the victory for his people** (1 Sam. 17:45-51).

Even though Goliath was bigger, stronger, and more experienced, David was confident in God's \_\_\_\_\_ and purpose to \_\_\_\_\_ David for His glory.

**ESSENTIAL DOCTRINE #56: CHRIST'S EXALTATION**

Whereas the death of Christ was the ultimate example of His humiliation, the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ from the dead is the first and glorious example of Christ's exaltation. Christ was exalted when God raised Him from the dead, and Christ was exalted when He \_\_\_\_\_ to the Father's right hand. He will be exalted by all \_\_\_\_\_ when He returns. All of these aspects work together to magnify the glory and worth of Christ, resulting in the praise of the glory of His grace in rescuing sinners.

**?** What are some parallels you see between David's and Jesus's victories?

**MY RESPONSE**

Because we have been forgiven through the power of the cross, we pursue the nations, not in judgment but with the message of grace that all may hear the good news and be swept up into the glorious love and grace of God.

- **HEAD:** What are you doing to equip yourself for the spiritual battles that come your way on earth?
- **HEART:** Where should you acknowledge your need for the prayers and help of other believers?
- **HANDS:** What opportunities will you have this week to trust God as you obey Him?

NOTES

**VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY**

"Our spiritual David, Jesus Christ, in his divine righteousness has taken away our sin and slew death with his eternal life . . . That is the joyous gospel with which the Holy Spirit comforts all repentant and troubled hearts."<sup>3</sup>

-Dirk Philips (1504-1568)