

David and Goliath

The battle between David and Goliath is one of the most famous stories in the Bible, found in **1 Samuel 17**. It is not just about a boy defeating a giant; it is about faith, God's deliverance, courage, and the contrast between **trust in God vs. trust in human strength**. Here is a clear walkthrough of the story and what it means.



Setting the Scene

- Israel is at war with the **Philistines**
- The armies face each other in the **Valley of Elah**
- Each army stands on opposite hills with the valley in between

Instead of full-scale battle, the Philistines propose **champion warfare**—one warrior vs. another to decide the conflict.



Who was Goliath?

- A Philistine warrior from **Gath**
- Described as **extremely tall** (the Masoretic Text says ~9'9"; other manuscripts ~6'9")
- Wore heavy bronze armor
- Carried:
 - a massive spear
 - a sword
 - a javelin
- Protected by a **shield-bearer**

He issues a **daily challenge** for 40 days:

"Choose a man to fight me. If he kills me, we will be your servants; if I kill him, you will serve us."

Israel's soldiers—including **King Saul**—are terrified.



Who was David at this point?

- Youngest son of Jesse
- A **shepherd**
- Not yet full-time in Saul's army
- Sent by his father to bring food to his brothers at the battlefield
- Already secretly anointed by Samuel as future king (1 Samuel 16)
- Already experienced God's help fighting **lions and bears**

When David hears Goliath mock Israel and **God**, he is shocked that no one is trusting the Lord enough to fight.



David's Motivation

David does **not** see this as:

- personal glory
- a chance for fame
- a test of strength

He sees it as: an insult against **the living God**

He asks: "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"



Saul and David Talk

Saul at first dismisses David:

- David is **young**; Goliath is a **trained warrior**

David responds with faith:

- God delivered him from **lion and bear**; God will deliver him from **Goliath**

Saul offers his own armor, but David refuses:

- It is heavy
- It does not fit
- More importantly, David relies not on armor but on **God**

David and Goliath



Weapons David Chose

David goes to the brook and selects:

- **five smooth stones**
- a simple **sling**
- his shepherd's staff

Why five stones? Scripture does not say, but possibilities include:

- preparation, not presumption
- Goliath had giant relatives later mentioned in Scripture
- 5 is a number associated with "grace" in Scripture (5 stones with 1 sacrificed)

The emphasis: **God**, not the weapons, wins the battle.



The Confrontation

Goliath mocks David:

- insults him
- curses him by his gods
- ridicules his youth and lack of armor

David answers with one of the most powerful faith statements in Scripture:

"You come to me with a sword and spear, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts... the battle is the LORD's."



The Battle Itself

- David runs toward the giant
- Uses his sling
- A stone strikes Goliath in the **forehead**
- Goliath falls face down (like the idol Dagon in 1 Samuel 5:3–4)
- David takes Goliath's own **sword**
- David **kills him and cuts off his head** (again like Dagon)

The Philistines flee in fear. Israel pursues and wins the battle.



Why This Story Matters (Key Themes)

1. God uses the unlikely

- youngest son
- shepherd, not soldier
- no armor, no experience

2. Faith vs. fear

- Saul and soldiers: fear giant
- David: sees **God's power**, not the giant's size

3. God's name and honor matter

David's greatest concern was: God's reputation among the nations

4. The battle belongs to the Lord

Victory comes from:

- God's power
- not human strength
- not weapons
- not size or status

5. A picture pointing forward

Many Christians see David as a **type of Christ**:

- unexpected deliverer
- fights the enemy Israel cannot defeat
- brings victory to God's people
- wins not by worldly power but by God's will