

Day 282 - MONDAY: November 6th

1 Samuel 17

1 Samuel 17:1-58 NKJV

Now the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle, and were gathered at Sochoh, which belongs to Judah; they encamped between Sochoh and Azekah, in Ephes Dammim. And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and they encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array against the Philistines. The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. He had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. And he had bronze armor on his legs and a bronze javelin between his shoulders. Now the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his iron spearhead weighed six hundred shekels; and a shield-bearer went before him. Then he stood and cried out to the armies of Israel, and said to them, "Why have you come out to line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and you the servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. 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." And the Philistine said, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem Judah, whose name was Jesse, and who had eight sons. And the man was old, advanced in years, in the days of Saul. The three oldest sons of Jesse had gone to follow Saul to

the battle. The names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. David was the youngest. And the three oldest followed Saul. But David occasionally went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem. And the Philistine drew near and presented himself forty days, morning and evening. Then Jesse said to his son David, "Take now for your brothers an ephah of this dried grain and these ten loaves, and run to your brothers at the camp. And carry these ten cheeses to the captain of their thousand, and see how your brothers fare, and bring back news of them." Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, and took the things and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the camp as the army was going out to the fight and shouting for the battle. For Israel and the Philistines had drawn up in battle array, army against army. And David left his supplies in the hand of the supply keeper, ran to the army, and came and greeted his brothers. Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines; and he spoke according to the same words. So David heard them. And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were dreadfully afraid. So the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel; and it shall be that the man who kills him the king will enrich with great riches, will give him his daughter, and give his father's house exemption from taxes in Israel." Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, "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?" And the people answered him in this manner, saying, "So shall it be done for the man who kills him." Now Eliab his oldest brother heard

when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger was aroused against David, and he said, "Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle." And David said, "What have I done now? Is there not a cause?" Then he turned from him toward another and said the same thing; and these people answered him as the first ones did. Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported them to Saul; and he sent for him. Then David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God." Moreover David said, "The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!" So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. And David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them." So David took them off. Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine. So the Philistine came, and began drawing near to David, and the man who bore the shield went before

him. And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was only a youth, ruddy and good-looking. So the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, 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. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands." So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hurried and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. But there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Shaaraim, even as far as Gath and Ekron. Then the children of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their tents. And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his

armor in his tent. When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this youth?" And Abner said, "As your soul lives, O king, I do not know." So the king said, "Inquire whose son this young man is." Then, as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" So David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

### **Daily Deep Dive:**

The UCG reading program states: "In chapter 17 we will read about David's great courage and faith in facing Goliath, the giant. The Philistines were forever taunting their neighbors the Israelites. The Philistines were in a superior position to the Israelites in trade and technology. One way the Philistines tried to keep the Israelites subservient was by their monopoly on instruments of iron. While the iron age had come to the Philistines, the Israelites were only able to manufacture implements made of the softer bronze. The ability to forge iron weapons gave the Philistines a decided military advantage over the Israelites.

On top of that, here comes Goliath of Gath, a one-man army who, at 9 feet 9 inches, would dwarf even the tallest of today's professional basketball players! It is interesting that Goliath is mentioned as being from Gath. When the Israelites first came to the Promised Land, they encountered giants throughout it: "There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight" (Numbers 13:33). Most of them, however, were wiped out by Joshua: "And at that time Joshua came and cut off the Anakim from the mountains: from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, from all the mountains of Judah, and

from all the mountains of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities" (Joshua 11:21). But notice the next verse: "None of the Anakim were left in the land of the children of Israel; they remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod" (verse 22). So this unusual lineage remained in these three Philistine cities only—and Goliath, 400 years later, was from Gath. Moreover, he was, we will later find out, not the only giant from that area (see 2 Samuel 21:15-22; 1 Chronicles 20:4-8). The Hebrew expression translated "champion" in verse 4 literally means "a man who is a go-between." Goliath offered a one-on-one, man-to-man, winner-take-all challenge to the Israelites. There were no takers. Though Saul was head and shoulders above his own people, he was certainly no match for Goliath. This presented seemingly impossible odds that virtually checkmated the king of Israel.

Three of David's oldest brothers were among the fighting men on the battlefield. Young David's responsibilities included keeping the sheep back home with an occasional trip to the front lines to bring supplies to his brothers and their leaders. Every day, morning and evening, for nearly six weeks, Goliath would come out and defy Israel to accept his challenge (verse 16). It frightened the wits out of the Israelite soldiers. Then, one day, David happened to be there to hear Goliath's challenge. What really got to David was the blasphemous reproach brought on the armies of the living God (verse 26). The word "uncircumcised" was a clear indication that the Philistines were not in a covenant relationship with the living God as the Israelites were. Goliath was the enemy of God's people. David immediately recognized that it was wrong to allow this situation to continue.

David believed it was necessary to intervene at this momentous time. It was not a matter of pride or vainglory on his part. His motives were selfless, yet he had to endure the criticisms of his brothers (verse 28).

David had no doubt in his mind that it had been the Lord who had given him victory over the wild animals that attacked his flocks (verses 34-37). David had gained the confidence to face Goliath: "He [the Lord] will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." And: "The battle is the LORD's" (verse 47).

Besides, in his spare time while tending the sheep, David had probably sharpened his aim by practicing with his sling for hours on end, like boys today knocking tin cans off of fence posts, till he knew he wouldn't miss. "A sling was the typical equipment of a shepherd. It was a hollow pocket of leather attached to two cords. Putting a stone in the pouch, the slinger would whirl it around his head to build up momentum. Releasing one of the cords would hurl the stone at its target. Slingers were a regular part of armies in the ancient Middle East (see Judg. 20:16)" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on 17:40).

It didn't matter that Saul's armor didn't fit because David knew that the entire assembly of soldiers would be shown that the Almighty, All-Powerful Lord of Hosts saves not with sword and spear (verse 47).

David exhibits a remarkable faith and courage for one so young.

When David slays Goliath, the Philistines flee (verse 51), breaking their original agreement that, if their champion were defeated, they would accept servitude to the Israelites (compare verse 9). We might wonder as to whether the Philistines had originally intended to be bound by this agreement. More likely, considering the stature of Goliath, they probably had not even considered the possibility that he could be defeated. In any case, we do not find the Philistines being subservient even after they get over the shock of losing. Instead, they remain as Israel's enemies. In the wake of David's victory, Saul asks whose son he is. *The Nelson Study Bible* comments: "How does this question fit with the fact that David had been serving as a musician in Saul's court (16:18-23)? Saul's unstable mental condition (16:14, 15) may have affected his

memory. Saul may have recognized David as his court musician but forgotten the name of David's father. He would need to know it in order to reward David's family (v. 25). It is also possible that in his question, Saul's principle interest was not David's identity, but the possibility that David was a contender for the throne of Israel" (note on 17:55)." [END]

Verse 5 – John Gill states: “which made one hundred and fifty six pounds”

Verse 7 – The iron spearhead weighed “eighteen pounds twelve ounces” (Adam Clarke)

Verse 28 – Siblings can bring out the worst in each other. We aren't given any background to why Eliab spoke to his youngest brother like this. Maybe jealousy over David being anointed and also him playing his harp for the king. The oldest brother here is likely in his mid-twenties and still growing in character and maybe feels embarrassed by his youngest brother's presence and words.

John Gill's commentary states: “hat he was too proud to keep sheep, and wanted to advance himself in the army, and make a figure there, and thereby gratify his vanity and ambition, which was the reverse of David's character; for, such was his humility, that, though he was anointed king, and had been preferred in Saul's court, yet condescended with all readiness to keep his father's sheep; and what he now proposed was not from any bad principle in his heart, but purely for the glory of God, and the honour of the people of Israel, who were both reproached:” [END]

Verse 29 – You can almost hear David's words to his sibling: “What have I done now?” You are always getting angry with me, what is it this time?



Verse 33 – Saul tells David he’s a “youth”. Strongs dictionary states: “a boy from the age of infancy to adolescence”. This again reveals that David is not fighting age.

Verse 34 – In the NKJV this reads as if David “used to keep” his father’s sheep. But this isn’t a very clear translation. It’s meant to say that this is what he has been doing in his life, but not to indicate he doesn’t do it anymore. In other words “I’ve been a shepherd over my father’s sheep...”

Verse 46 – Not only do the words of David communicate his deep faith in the Almighty, but also his motivation that God would not be dishonored and in fact that all would honor God and know that the God of Israel is powerful and with them. We see in the next verse David’s clear understanding that God doesn’t work like humans and doesn’t need human ways of fighting.

Verse 48 – David in great faith and confidence, ran toward this giant and closed the gap. Was this for a strategic reason?

Verse 49 – There is a lot of conjecture as to how this happened, whether Goliath had removed his helmet, or whether David hit him in the eye. The Hebrew says he hit him in the brow or forehead and that it sank in (also could be translated “pierced” or “implanted”). It appears that this stone cracked his forehead and remained implanted within his skull.

Verse 54 – Sometimes the Bible includes details that while seeming to take place in a short amount of time, would have actually occurred over some time. This is one of those verses. David didn’t have a tent their at

the battle, as he had just traveled in to check on his brothers, but seems to have taken home Goliath's armour as a prize of sorts. David probably carried Goliath's head when we read about the events in 1 Samuel 18:6. Goliath's giant head would have represented God's great power over Israel's enemies.