

# David Versus Goliath: The Original Under Dog Story

## I Samuel 17

### David the Shepherd

David was the least in his family. When they were choosing a king to anoint to replace Saul, they went through all of Jesse's children...except David. Jesse didn't bring David because he was still a very young boy, likely a teenager and he was quite small and so Jesse wouldn't have ever expected that David was God's choice but God doesn't look on the outside...He looks at the heart (1 Sam 16:7). He was a shepherd and shepherds in the Far and Middle East were looked down upon by most of society in those days. To a great extent, they still are today.

### Goliath the Giant

Goliath, who came from Gath, had a size that was enormous and he was also listed as a champion. His height was six cubits (1 Sam 17:4) which is about nine feet tall, and the armor and spear he carried weighed several hundred pounds and the weight of the iron alone would have been too much for most men to even pick up, not to mention wear into battle. Also, Goliath was a champion of one of the fiercest and most experienced and battle tested nations there were...Philistia. Goliath of the Philistines was equal to the heavy weight champion of the world and he was about to face the bantam weight contender of Israel.

### The Colossal Mismatch

	<u>David</u>	<u>Goliath</u>
<b>Age:</b>	17-18?	30ish?
<b>Height:</b>	5' 8" ish?	9 feet
<b>Weight:</b>	160ish?	350+?
<b>Military Experience:</b>	none	very experienced

### David versus Goliath Story Summary

When David came to the battle front to bring food for the troops, Goliath was hurling insults at the God of Israel and David was outraged. He said "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" (1 Sam 17:26)?

When David pleaded with King Saul to kill Goliath, Saul finally relented but surely no one except David expected him to win.

“When the Philistine looked and saw David, he despised him, for he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. 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. 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.” 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” (1 Sam 17:42-45).

Earlier, David had “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” (1 Sam 17:40). “When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. 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. 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. 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.” (1 Sam 17:48-51).

### **Points of Interest from the Story of David and Goliath**

- Why did they wait 40 days to begin the battle? Probably for several reasons. Everyone was afraid of Goliath. He seemed invincible. Not even King Saul, the tallest man in Israel, had stepped out to fight. Also, the sides of the valley were very steep. Whoever made the first move would have a strong disadvantage and probably suffer great loss. Both sides were waiting for the other to attack first.
- David chose not to wear the King's armor because it felt cumbersome and unfamiliar. David was comfortable with his simple sling, a weapon he was skilled at using. God will use the unique skills he's already placed in your hands, so don't worry about "wearing the King's armor." Just be yourself and use the familiar gifts and talents God has given you. He will work miracles through you.
- David's faith in God caused him to look at the giant from a different perspective. Goliath was merely a mortal man defying an all-powerful God. David looked at the battle from God's point of view. If we look at giant problems and impossible situations from God's perspective, we realize that God will fight for us and with us. When we put things in proper perspective, we see more clearly, and we can fight more effectively.
- When the giant criticized, insulted, and threatened, David didn't stop or even waver. Everyone else cowered in fear, but David ran to the battle. He knew that action needed to be taken. David did the right thing in spite of discouraging insults and fearful threats. Only God's opinion mattered to David.

### **Some Key Lessons we can learn**

- 1) You can do great things even if young
- 2) Birth order does not have to limit your success
- 3) Pride goes before the fall
- 4) Don't fear any human, fear God
- 5) Past success can give us confidence
- 6) Jealousy leads to bitterness
- 7) Nothing is impossible if God is with us (Luke 1:26-37)
- 8)

### **Questions for Reflection**

Are you facing a giant problem or impossible situation? Stop for a minute and refocus. Can you see the situation more clearly from God's vantage point?

Do you need to take courageous action in the face of insults and/or fearful circumstances? Do you trust that God will fight for you and with you? Remember, God's opinion is the only one that matters. God plus you equals a winning combination!