

A Day to Remember! (1 Samuel 17:55-18:4)

What made this day so remarkable and memorable for David?

1. David's departure from Bethlehem to the decapitation of Goliath (v.17-54)

- David sets out early in the morning towards the Valley of Elah where the armies of the Philistines and Israelites are at a standstill; he is delivering bread to his three brothers and cheeses for their commanders (v.17-18).
- Upon arriving at the Valley of Elah, David hears the war cry and left the food with the keeper of the baggage to find his three brothers (v.19-22).
- When David finds them, he hears Goliath's taunting, mockery, and blasphemy for the first time (v.23). Goliath has been coming out morning and evening for forty days (v.16, 23). David investigates the expected rewards for the victor and displays great faith (v.24-30). Saul receives word about David, and he is subsequently summoned before Saul.
- David submits his resume to Saul on why he is equipped to fight Goliath; Goliath is a wild beast, just like a lion or bear. David will strike down Goliath, just as he did to other beasts who threatened him and his sheep. The LORD brings the victory (v.31-37). After rejecting Saul's armor because it was not "tested", David meets Goliath in battle armed with five stones, a sling and his shepherd's staff (v.40).
- Once the verbal altercations ceased (v.41-47), David took out one stone, placed it in his sling, and released the baseball-sized projectile. It struck Goliath in the forehead, shattering his frontal lobe. (v.48-49). After Goliath fell face down, for good measure, David took Goliath's own sword out of its sheath and cut off his head (v.50).
- The Philistines flee westward ~ 10 miles westward to Gath and Ekron (v.52-53).

2. The Inquisitiveness of Saul and Abner (v.55-58)

- Saul appears to be unfamiliar with who the father of David is. Even though Saul never calls David by his own name in chapter 17, that does not prove he is unaware of it. Saul may not have known who David's father was previously (16:14-23).
- Saul wanted to know who David's father was so that his family can receive the tax- exemption status (v.25).
- In 17:15, David is already serving Saul part time. Saul had permitted David to serve him, as well as his father, Jesse. Saul may not have had any "episodes" (16:14-15) for at least 40 days, so David's musical talents were unnecessary. Additionally, Saul is not fighting (17:11), so David's service, as his armor bearer, is not required. After the battle, Saul took him that day to serve him (18:2). David was not permitted to leave Saul's service from then on.

3. A new friendship and covenant were birthed (18:1-4)

Jonathan, at the very least, had witnessed David going out to meet and fight Goliath and initiates their friendship and covenant.

- A. Their souls were knit to one another: This is the same expression that is used to describe Jacob's relationship with his son, Benjamin (Gen. 44:30); it describes a union, or bond that is based on an indivisible truth. David and Jonathan had much in common with one another; they were both courageous and capable young men who possessed extraordinary and profound faith in the LORD. They each had initiated a faith-motivated attack against a superior army that resulted in a great victory.
- B. Jonathan loved David as his own soul: Both Saul (16:21) and Jonathan (18:1) loved David. This "love" refers to a political love, as opposed to a sexual or emotional love. This Hebrew word is used to describe the love that Hiram, the King of Tyre had towards David (1 Kings 5:1).
- C. Jonathan, in love, established a covenant with David: this covenant was established through extravagant gifts; Jonathan gave David his robe, armor, sword, bow, and belt. Jonathan has renounced his position as prince and has symbolically given it to David. Jonathan is unaware that Saul has already forfeited Jonathan as future king (13:13-14). Beyond the gifts themselves, the covenant included preserving and protecting each other (20:1-4; 2 Sam. 9:1-13).

Jonathan was a popular man prior to this battle (14:45). In one battle, David's popularity and fame surpasses Jonathan's and even Saul's (18:7). Instead of seeing an enemy in David, he sees a friend and brother in the LORD who is like-minded. Jonathan had no problem renouncing his position, fame, and popularity to a greater man with greater faith. Envy, resentment, and hatred springs from worldly and selfish priorities. Godly love is concerned with the glory of God and will never oppose the labor of others based on race, ethnicity, class, or status; where sin would see an enemy, faith sees a friend.

4. The Robe

- There has been a motif in which the greater, more powerful person passes his weapons on to David; King Saul offered his armor and his sword to David (17:38-39). Goliath's sword and armor became David's after he was decapitated (17:54), and now Jonathan gives David his sword, bow, armor, belt, and robe.
- The robe is a prominent motif in 1 Samuel. Samuel was marked out by the robe that his mother Hannah made for him (2:19). Saul tore Samuel's robe (15:27). In 24:4 (cf 24:11), David cut the corner of Saul's robe. Clothing is the mark of status. By giving his robe to David, Jonathan is passing over his badge of rank to David, acknowledging that David is going to succeed him to the throne.