

# **David's Spiritual Secret— David & Goliath Standing for God All Alone 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 17**

David was willing to stand for God--all alone. And there were few more lonely spots in the history of the universe than the hillside of the Valley of Elah in the 'no man's land' between the armies of Israel and the Philistines.

Haven't we all sometimes wished we could have had a bird's eye view of the titanic confrontation of David and Goliath? That scene in biblical history stands as one of the greatest moments of God's Word.

Let's go back to the crisp, cool air of a Middle Eastern morning three thousand years ago to see David. Two callused feet slipped quietly out from under the warmth of a wool fleece and deftly into the sandals left carefully beside the low wooden cot. In the twilight of early morning's pre-dawn darkness the possibly red headed, teenaged-boy crept carefully out of the stone house on the outskirts of Bethlehem.

With the confidence of integrity and the joy of purity--young David was on his way to a moment never to fade from the pages of history.

Walking excitedly the rocky paths up and down the hills of Judah, the young shepherd boy was headed to the Valley of Elah a mere 8 miles off. Arriving before breakfast young David eagerly surveyed the eastern rim of the valley. Campfires and tents dotted the hillside as he looked at the army of God's people Israel. With a heart filled with gratitude and wonder David strode up to the first tent and asked if anyone knew where his brothers from Bethlehem were camping. The special provisions his dad had sent them needed to be delivered, but they were only a part of David's purpose in coming.

David longed to see the people who stood for his God. But even more, David so loved the God of Israel; he wanted to see Him at work. David sang of His God on his long vigils around the hills of Bethlehem caring for his father's sheep. In fact, in his favorite song from the hills where he sat day after day as a shepherd boy--he sang of the Lord as his shepherd. And so with that Psalm 23 heart, David came as God's man for this very climactic moment in history!

Suddenly David's search for his brothers abruptly ended as a loud voice brimming with evil rumbled up the hillsides of that valley. In the distance a pillar of armor encasing

God's enemy Goliath sprayed the venom of the ancient serpent from Eden across the faithless and frightened people of God.

Standing just above the height of a basketball rim, he was a full three feet taller than Michael Jordan. Goliath easily weighed over 400 pounds and was dressed in layers of shining armor of bronze that weighed in at another 150 plus pounds. Then at the end of an eight foot long pole was a metal spear point that weighed about 20 pounds. Goliath was equipped with the very latest military weaponry and was a fearsome sight.

Shocked, grieved, and angered--David heard for the first time this irreverent pagan reviling the God of Heaven. Instantly he wanted to stand for the honor of God at all costs. As we know so well, he did. Unafraid and with no concern for self he embodies what God can do with all who think only of the Lord and not of themselves.

With that brief insight, let's read God's eyewitness, on the spot account—

of one of the greatest moments in history,

as the unseen by all but David—God,

defeats the most visible representation of all that God is not—Goliath.

**Read 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 17 and pray.**

This morning, open with me to one of the greatest chapters in God's Word, 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 17. The record of David and Goliath from God's perspective was David standing all alone for God!

David is the person we know more about from God's perspective--than any other human that ever lived.

David has more words written about him by God—than any other human who has ever lived.

David's life has been given to us by God to demonstrate how he lived a life for God's purposes. And so we have found that David's first spiritual secret was ***a heart to serve***. David wanted to serve the Lord. David was under God's command, he did what the Lord asked him to do, willingly unseen and obscure—always wanting the Lord to get all the glory. A simpler way to say that is—David was God's servant all his days.

A second element of his life is that David had ***a heart to stand***—David was willing to serve God even if he was the only one at any particular moment doing so. Just as all of us need to be life long servants of God—we also need to decide that we too, like David will stand all alone for the Lord.

We stand alone for God by denying ungodliness.

- Will you stand all alone for God when needed at work, at school, and at home?

When the conversation, entertainment, or activities begin to dishonor the Name of the Lord—will you stand all alone for the Lord against it? We are called to deny ungodliness in any form that touches our lives. ***Titus 2:11-13 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, NKJV***

We stand alone for God by hungering for the Lord each day.

- Will you stand alone for God by reading His Word when you travel, while you are away at school, or when you are alone at home? Will you stand alone for God by praying over your meals even when you are alone? Will you stand alone for God by memorizing His Word instead of watching TV all night like most everyone else does? Our world believes that Jesus is unimportant and that we are the reason to live not Him. The only way to counter that horrible lie is to show that what Jesus said, we His children live and believe. ***Matthew 4:4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" NKJV***

Most people observing David and Goliath only saw two people out there facing one another. But David saw one more person—the Lord. He felt that there were three of them out there and that made all the difference! Just as he had found on the lonely hillsides as a shepherd boy—David feared no evil for Thou [God] art with me"! What David had thought, believed, and sang to the Lord—was true in his life.

God was as real to confident David as the fearsome giant Goliath was to all the quaking Israelite army. David knew that the battle was the Lord's.

To stand alone, the first choice we see in David is ***God consciousness***. David acted just like Joseph had 800 years earlier, facing Potiphar's wife blurting out 'how can I do this evil in God's sight'! A servant of God who stands alone resists finding pleasure in sin. 400 years earlier than David, a similar servant named Moses would turn away from the glittering pleasures of Egypt because he could see the God who is invisible to those without faith Hebrews 11:25-27).

So David, Moses, and Joseph all had God consciousness. They saw God was watching them. That changed everything. It made that battles not their's alone—but God's. Do you fight all your own battles—all alone? Or have you come to the place that you realize that the battle is the Lord's? David did and that is why God wants us to remember him! He stood all alone for God.

*1 Samuel 17:47 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." NKJV*

The events of that day are indelibly sketched on our hearts. The shepherd lad, a handful

of stones, a homemade weapon plus God--made an unbeatable army of one. David defeated the giant and became an instant and enduring hero of all the ages. Why? In our previous studies we went back and examined David in his youth and found what he lived for in those early days that made him great. That was the list of qualities God captured for us in 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 16 plus the resolves of his youth that David made in Psalm 132. They are all part of David's Spiritual Secret. David thirsted to serve God when he was young!

A second choice for standing alone for God we find in David's life is **perseverance**. We see that quality starting back in v. 28. What is amazing about David is how he stood alone despite so many obstacles. Starting in 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 17:28 we see that his oldest brother Eliab abused David (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 17:28), then King Saul tried to discourage David (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 17:33), and finally giant Goliath cursed David (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 17:43). And yet David went onward to victory!

*1 Samuel 17:28 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.**" NKJV*

But David wouldn't be defeated by unfounded criticism.

*1 Samuel 17:33 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." NKJV*

But David wouldn't be defeated by unfounded fears.

*1 Samuel 17:43 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.** NKJV*

So David certainly would not be defeated by an unholy, God defying pagan!

In the face of his critics, even those of his own family David stood alone. In the presence of his own King and the one he was offering to risk his life for discouraging him—David continues to stand alone. And then in the face of the very enemy of God who was calling down the devil's legions with his curses—David stands. But never was he really alone—for God stood with him, beside him, and in front of him. David knew that God was with him and for him!

A third choice for standing alone is **having a divine perspective**. Goliath represented more than a formidable military challenge. He represented evil. His armor is described as having "scales" like the snake Satan embodied while tempting Adam and Eve. David recognized the true nature of Goliath's challenge and accepted it with the correct underlying motive so that the world would "know that there is a God in Israel."

- Joshua saw God at the crossing of the dried up Jordan River--Joshua 4:24 **that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever.**" NKJV
- David saw God at Elah--1 Samuel 17:46 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.** NKJV
- Solomon saw God at the Temple--1 Kings 8:46, 60 "When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to the land of the enemy, far or near; 60 **that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God; there is no other.** NKJV
- Hezekiah saw God at the threat of Assyria--2 Kings 19:19 Now therefore, O Lord our God, I pray, save us from his hand, **that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the Lord God, You alone.**" NKJV

From history we find one more choice David made. **He chose to do everything he could do for the advancement of God's Kingdom.** Often we overlook one of the byproducts of David's troubles. It is very possible that David learned and brought the secret of iron making into Israel from his time living among the far superior technological culture of the Philistines.

When David's stone knocked Goliath to the ground, and David drew Goliath's sword and cut off the giant's head—the Philistines still were far more advanced than the Israelites. When King Saul became jealous of David and tried to kill him. David, his men, and their families they were driven to flee to Achish, the Philistine king of Gath (1 Samuel 27), who gave David the Philistine city of Ziklag.

After years of running and hiding from Saul, when David became king of Israel the Israelites had learned to work iron and became the dominant culture in the region (2 Samuel 5:17-25). Consequently, the Philistines lost power and influence.

It is possible that David (or one of his men) uncovered the Philistine's secret of iron technology while living in Gath and brought it to the Israelites.<sup>1</sup> David wanted to use every means for God, and God taught David even in his hardest days lessons that would not only help him but give him ways to serve the people of God.

Truths God can use in our lives. For those who are willing to stand alone in God's power, for His glory--

### 1. ***God often use people who seem to have little to offer to accomplish His***

<sup>1</sup> Ray Vander Laan, with Stephen and Amanda Sorenson, *Faith Lessons on the Promised Land Leader's Guide*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999, Pg. 140-41.

**purposes.** When we seek to accomplish God's work, our motivation and faith in God is far more significant than our talent or resources. David, for example, was a young shepherd who appeared to have little to offer, but he acted as God's representative. He used his training and primitive tools in order to reveal the God of Israel to the world of his day. He used a simple sling to throw a stone at a man who had the best military technology an advanced culture could offer and he triumphed because God honored his throw.

2. **God seeks each of us to use our particular gifts and talents to influence our culture for Him.** David did what God had qualified and gifted him to do and because David was motivated by righteousness, he made a powerful impact on his culture. Likewise, we don't have to be anything other than the people God has created us to be in order to accomplish His purposes. Who He has made us to be is good enough. We need only to express the gifts and talents He has given us.
3. **God wants us to use every resource, including the tools and technology of our culture its "iron" to accomplish His purposes.** The Israelites achieved a decisive victory over the Philistines when David killed Goliath. Unfortunately, the Philistines remained the superior culture for quite a while afterward (1 Samuel 31). Only when the Israelites, under the reign of faithful King David, harnessed the Philistines' advanced iron technology and used it for God's purposes did they become a great influence and power. Today, Christians who hold a Bible-based value system and are able to shape and control the "iron" of their society will greatly impact their culture.<sup>2</sup>

And what happened when David stood alone? Because of this divine perspective on life David did what was impossible—and the Lord got all the glory. David will forever be remembered by God as His servant who did all God's will.

*1 Kings 15:5 because David **did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.** NKJV*

*Acts 13:36 "For when David **had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed.** NIV*

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David had a lifetime of situations after Goliath, where he stood all alone for God. Did David ever quit these simple choices? Did he grow out of simply being God's servant? No—he stayed that way to the end. That is why he is such a vivid example of serving God!

What does God do when we choose to stand for Him when all around us others do not? Join me as we see one other battle David had to face. Later in life David faces enemies fiercer than Philistines—some of his own family and friends turn against him. David's response? Again, as God's servant the battle is always the Lord's. And again we have a pattern of what we as God's servants should also do!

David portrays a life entrusted to God's care. He gives each care to the Lord. Watch him as David allows the Lord to guide, direct, and take care of every details of his life.

### **God's inspires others to come to our aid when we are His servants.**

*2 Samuel 15: 19-21 Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why are you also going with us? Return and remain with the king. For you are a foreigner and also an exile from your own place. 20 In fact, you came only yesterday. **Should I make you wander up and down with us today, since I go I know not where? Return, and take your brethren back. Mercy and truth be with you."** 21 But Ittai answered the king and said, "As the Lord lives, and as my lord the king lives, **surely in whatever place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also your servant will be.**" NKJV*

### **David did not take his own personal safety into his own hands—he trusts the Lord waits for His protection.**

*2 Samuel 15:25 Then the king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, **He will bring me back and show me both it and His dwelling place.**" NKJV*

David left his burdens with the Lord so he didn't have to take matters into his own hands.

### **David bows and worshipped and offered up a Psalm of praise to God—even as he wept bitter tears of sorrow and grief.**

*2 Samuel 15: 30, 32 So David went up by the Ascent of the Mount of Olives, and **wept as he went up**; and he had his head covered and went barefoot. And all the people who were with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they went up. 32 Now it happened when David **had come to the top of the mountain**, where **he worshiped God**—there was Hushai the Archite coming to meet him with his robe torn and dust on his head. NKJV*

God's servants can continue in worship even when life is tough, difficult, and almost looking like it is impossible to go on. Turn with me to the exact record of the worship that flowed from David. This is what can flow from us if we like David—bow in worship when the bitter tears of sorrow and grief fall across our lives.

### *Psalm 3: 1-8 **A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.***

1 Lord, how they have increased who trouble me!  
**Many** are they who rise up against me.  
2 **Many** are they who say of me,  
"There is no help for him in God."  
3 But **You, O Lord, are a shield for me,**  
My glory and **the One who lifts up my head.**



4 **I cried** to the Lord with my voice,  
And **He heard** me from His holy hill.  
5 **I lay down and slept;**  
I awoke, for **the Lord sustained me.**  
6 **I will not be afraid** of ten thousands of people  
Who have set themselves against me all around.  
7 Arise, O Lord;  
Save me, O my God!  
For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone;  
You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.  
8 **Salvation** belongs to the Lord.  
**Your blessing** is upon Your people. NKJV

David trusted God's control. He relied upon it and prayed for it. Instead of fear he had faith and gave worship.

**David entrusts all the uncontrollable circumstances of his life to the Lord.**

*2 Samuel 15: 31 Then someone told David, saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O Lord, I pray, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness!" NKJV*

People often share reports that can either lead us to fear or prompt us to prayer. David lifts his heart in prayer to the Lord at this evil report!

**David realized that God allows adversaries to reveal what is really in our hearts.** So he entrusts his personal adversaries to the Lord.

*2 Samuel 16: 9-11 Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Please, let me go over and take off his head!" 10 But the king said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse, because the Lord has said to him, 'Curse David.' Who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?' " 11 And David said to Abishai and all his servants, "See how my son who came from my own body seeks my life. How much more now may this Benjamite? Let him alone, and let him curse; for so the Lord has ordered him. NKJV*

David knew that God raises up and puts down. He knew adversaries were allowed by God—and he wanted to respond correctly!

**David fled to the Lord when suffering affliction.** He always entrusted his personal sufferings to the Lord.

*2 Samuel 16: 12 It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing this day." NKJV*

David knew God cared, he knew God saw his troubles. He knew that the Lord can cause

all things to work together for good.

**David's situation was being managed by the Lord.** When we let God take care of us, and when we entrust our personal vengeance to the Lord—the Lord can do what we never could to remedy the situation.

Second Samuel 17:14 And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite [is] better than the counsel of Ahithophel. **For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.** (KJV)

'Vengeance is mine saith the Lord' (Hebrews ). Allow the Lord to recompense your enemies. David had many enemies and adversaries, but he let the Lord deal with them all.

**David's needs are met by the Lord.** God works behind the scenes in the hearts of people to provide just what David needed to continue on. So a servant of the Lord must always entrust his personal needs to the Lord.

2 Samuel 17:27-29 **Now it happened**, when David had come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the people of Ammon, Machir the son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, 28 brought beds and basins, earthen vessels and wheat, barley and flour, parched grain and beans, lentils and parched seeds, 29 honey and curds, sheep and cheese of the herd, **for David and the people who were with him to eat.** For they said, "The people are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness." NKJV

So David was God's servant. And his life is recorded as an example to us of how to serve the Lord. In similar fashion, Saul's life was recorded as a warning of how not to serve the Lord which we will see next time!