

1  **ONLY A BOY NAMED DAVID**

1 Samuel 17

2  **WARRIORS AND POETS**

- Warriors and Poets: A verse-by-verse study through the Unified Kingdom period of Israel and Judah.
- Although Saul is still officially king of Israel, God has taken His Spirit from Saul and given it to David, his anointed.
- Today's lesson continues our look at one of the most iconic stories in the Bible. Let us pray that we may look upon it with fresh eyes.

3  **A CLASH OF CULTURES**

- The Philistines have come to battle against Israel, as a reprisal against the Israelite's previous incursions under Saul.
- This battle is more than simply a battle between two armies: it is a clash between two cultures:
  - The sophisticated pagan Philistines
  - The fledgling Israelite nation, already led by a rebellious king

4  **GOLIATH**

- 1) An enormous enemy
  - Goliath was significantly larger and more powerful than anyone the Israelites would have ever seen
- 2) An invincible enemy
  - Goliath's armor alone weighed an impressive 125 lbs. His spear would have been unstoppable.
- 3) A mocking enemy
  - Goliath mocked the Israelites, calling them slaves of Saul.

5  **GOLIATH**

- 4) A demoralizing enemy
  - Confronted with an impossible foe, Israel has lost the very will to fight.
- 5) A coercive enemy
  - Goliath set the terms of the battle and victory – terms by which he never intended to abide.

6  **GOLIATH**

- 6) A defiant enemy
  - Goliath defied not just the army of Israel – but the God of Israel.
- 7) A terrifying enemy
  - Goliath had the entire army of Israel is not just demoralized – they are trembling with fear.

7  **1) AN ANOINTED HERO**

- *And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the Lord said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he." Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah. (1 Sam 16:12-13)*

8  **2) A DILIGENT HERO**

- *Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, named Jesse, who had*

*eight sons. In the days of Saul the man was already old and advanced in years. The three oldest sons of Jesse had followed Saul to the battle. And the names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. (1 Sam 17:12-13)*

9 **2) A DILIGENT HERO**

- *David was the youngest. The three eldest followed Saul, but David went back and forth from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem. (1 Sam 17:14-15)*
- This continues to suggest an interesting chronology: "from Saul" may mean in David's capacity as court musician/shield bearer for Saul, or it may refer to his presence with the army in general.

10 **AN INTERESTING CHRONOLOGY**

- Some scholars speculate that David's role as a court musician takes place after his encounter with Goliath. If so, this would explain why he is referred to by Saul's servants as a "mighty man of war."
- If the story is presented in chronological order, the events of the story still mesh; there are a number of reasons for Saul to inquire about David's family at the end of this story.

11 **2) A DILIGENT HERO**

- *For forty days the Philistine came forward and took his stand, morning and evening. And Jesse said to David his son, "Take for your brothers an ephah of this parched grain, and these ten loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp to your brothers. Also take these ten cheeses to the commander of their thousand. See if your brothers are well, and bring some token from them."(1 Sam 17:16-18)*

12 **2) A DILIGENT HERO**

- David is working diligently, both in the service of Saul (either as court musician/shield bearer or in the service of the army in general), and helping his father with the sheep back in Bethlehem.
- David is not sitting at home, waiting for a call or waiting for something to happen (remember: the anointing has already come).

13 **2) A DILIGENT HERO**

- David is engaged in the work of manhood – in the service of his country and of his family – when a greater opportunity for service presents itself.
- David serves as an interesting example of incremental release.

14 **3) A PASSIONATE HERO**

- *And David rose early in the morning and left the sheep with a keeper and took the provisions and went, as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the encampment as the host was going out to the battle line, shouting the war cry. And Israel and the Philistines drew up for battle, army against army. And David left the things in charge of the keeper of the baggage and ran to the ranks and went and greeted his brothers. (1 Sam 17:20-22)*

15 **3) A PASSIONATE HERO**

- *As he talked with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him. All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were much afraid. And the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel. And the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel."(1 Sam17:23-25)*

16 **3) A PASSIONATE HERO**

- *And David said to the men who stood by him, "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 the same way, "So shall it be done to the man who kills him."* (1 Sam 17:27-27)

17 **3) A PASSIONATE HERO**

- "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" David is filled with passion – not for the king's reputation or for the credit and honor of his family, but rather for the name and honor of the God of Israel.
- David is so incredulous that Goliath would be allowed to continue speaking like this that he wants to know how Saul has incentivized the men of Israel.

18 **4) AN OPPORTUNISTIC HERO**

- *Now Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke to the men. And Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, "Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your presumption and the evil of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle." And David said, "What have I done now? Was it not but a word?" And he turned away from him toward another, and spoke in the same way, and the people answered him again as before.* (1 Sam 17:28-30)

19 **4) AN OPPORTUNISTIC HERO**

- *When the words that David spoke were heard, they repeated them before Saul, and he sent for him. And David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."* (1 Sam 17:31-32).

20 **4) AN OPPORTUNISTIC HERO**

- Where everyone else sees obstacles (Goliath's size, his armor, his weapons), David sees an opportunity for victory and for God to get the glory.
- Even David's brother Eliab can only see the obstacles. He takes out his frustrations on David.
- David's reaction: What is it this time?

21 **4) AN OPPORTUNISTIC HERO**

- This difference in character sheds important light on why God rejected David's other brothers. Not only is Eliab an angry man (but David will struggle with anger too), he is limited by his perspective.
- For David's part, he sees challenges as opportunities for victory.

22 **5) A CONFIDENT HERO**

- *And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth." But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him.* (1 Sam 17:33-35)

23 **5) A CONFIDENT HERO**

- *Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God." And David said, "The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you!"* (1 Sam 17:36-37)

24 **5) A CONFIDENT HERO**

- David declares to Saul that God will give him the same kind of victory over Goliath that he has previously given him over the lion and the bear.
- David has learned how God works – how God can give him victory over his enemies – from the ways that God has worked in his life in the past.

25 **5) A CONFIDENT HERO**

- The purpose of incremental release should be to develop new opportunities by building on the ways that God has worked in your past.
  - God used David’s time as a shepherd both to prepare him for his confrontation with Goliath, and to groom him to shepherd God’s people.
- This is something that should start long before the teenage years or the beginning of the adult working career.

26 **6) A PRUDENT HERO**

- *Then Saul clothed David with his armor. He put a helmet of bronze on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail, and David strapped his sword over his armor. And he tried in vain to go, for he had not tested them. Then David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them." So David put them off. Then he 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 17:38-40)*

27 **6) A PRUDENT HERO**

- It is just as important (and possibly more important) to know your limitations as it is to know your strengths.
- David declines the use of Saul’s armor because he has not “tested” it – because he has never worn it or used it and he needs to focus on his competencies for the battle to come.

28 **6) A PRUDENT HERO**

- David chooses instead the sling – a weapon with which he is intimately familiar.
- It is important to realize that the sling was not a slingshot, it was not the weapon of a child.
- In fact, slings were extremely effective and deadly ranged weapons of the ancient world, and required a high degree of precision and expertise to use effectively.

29 **THE SLING**

- The sling is a projectile weapon typically used to throw a blunt object, such as a stone, or a metal “sling-bullet” – a heavy sphere made of metal.
- The sling had a longer range than the arrow or the javelin, and could be made from a number of common materials. As such, it was extremely common throughout the ancient world.

30 **THE SLING**

- A properly-aimed sling has an effective range of over 400 meters.
- Slingers are mentioned elsewhere in Scripture as formidable men of war (Judges 20:16).
- The Persian Empire was famous for their use of slingers against the Greeks.

31 **THE SLING**

- A rock or sling-bullet hurled from a sling would impact with enough concussive force to transfer shock through a helmet or body armor.
- The preferred ammunition for the sling, when no lead was available, was smooth stones from a riverbed. These would have been rounded from the flow of water and thus would fly

smoothly and predictably.

32  **7) A VICTORIOUS HERO**

- The story of David's victory over Goliath is recounted in verses 38-51.
- Despite Goliath's attempts to frighten him and dishearten him as he has done to the rest of the army of Israel, David remains resolute.
- He uses a stone from his sling and fells Goliath, and then while the Philistine champion is stunned, cuts off his head with his own sword.

33  **THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S**

- In the conflict of culture, ultimately the battle belongs to the Lord. We can never be smart enough, diligent enough, or entrepreneurial enough to be victorious without God's help.
- By being faithful with the flock of sheep with which God is entrusting us now, we earn greater responsibility later.
- The lions and bears we face now are here to prepare us for greater battles we may someday fight.