

THE Rock COMMUNITY CHURCH

1 Samuel 17:1-30

“Meet Goliath”

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Anaheim Hills, CA | RockCC.com

18:35

Good morning again, I have a question for you. When you have troubles in your life, if you have troubles in your life, where do you focus most of your attention?

18:52

Where do you focus most of your attention? On the problems or on the promises of God. The Word of God has a lot to say about our natural human emotion of being afraid when bad things come our way, but God promises us strength and peace

19:15

when we trust Him in our battles. We have a famous passage to enjoy today that presents quite a vivid lesson for us about fear, and faith. Will you pray with me, please? Father. Oh, as we come to this wonderful place in your word, it is familiar, it is such a blessing, but we want to come with ears that listen carefully, listen attentively to everything you have to say to us today so that we may be transformed by the truth and the power of Your word.

19:55

It is in the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen. Our passage is 1 Samuel 17, verses 1-30. If you want to use the Bible that's under the chair in front of you, you'll find it on page 291. Chapter 16 introduced us to a young shepherd named David, who was chosen by God to be the next king of Israel.

20:23

We also saw God depart from sinful King Saul, and God allowed a tormenting spirit, likely demonic, to inflict Saul with attacks of what probably looked like deep depression and anxiety. Then, as the Lord would have it, David became a special servant to Saul, remember? Because when David played his harp or lyre, then that harmful spirit left Saul, and he felt refreshed and well, so he kept David and so this made Saul

20:59

love David, at least for the time being. And now we come to chapter 17 and guess what? Philistines are back on the attack and they've got a big bad surprise for Israel. Our passage is a great one. It is great, but it's a little bit long.

21:20

So here's what we'll do, okay? We're gonna all read it and relish it together right now and then when we come back to study together we'll just read a few little sections, okay? Let's read 1st Samuel chapter 17 verses 1 to 30.

21:38

Now the Philistines gathered their army for battle and they were gathered at Socoh which belongs to Judah and encamped between Socoh and Azekah in Ephes-dammim. And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered and encamped in the valley of Elah and drew up in line of battle against the Philistines.

21:56

And the Philistines stood on the mountain on the one side and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side with the valley between them. And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath whose height was six cubits in a span.

22:14

He had a helmet of bronze on his head and he was armed with a coat of mail and the weight of the coat was 5,000 shekels of bronze. And he had a bronze armor on his legs and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders.

22:27

The shaft of the spear was like a weaver's beam and his spear's head weighed 600 shekels of iron and his shield bearer went before him. He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, why have you come out to draw up for battle?

22:44

Am I not a Philistine and are you not servants of Saul? Did you notice he opened with a question? I just thought I'd share that. He continued to shout, choose a man for yourself and let him come down to me.

23:01

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 ranks of Israel this day give me a man that we may fight together.

23:19

When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine they were dismayed and greatly afraid. Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah named Jesse who had eight sons. Ephrath was a district in Judah that included Bethlehem.

23:37

In the days of Saul the man Jesse was already old and advanced in years. The three oldest sons of Jesse had followed Saul to the battle. The names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn and next to him Abinadab and the third Shammah.

23:54

David was the youngest. The three elders followed Saul, but David went back and forth from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem. For 40 days, the Philistine came forward and took his stand, morning and evening.

24:08

And Jesse said to David, his son, take for your brothers an ephah of this parched grain and these 10 loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp to your brothers. Also take these 10 cheeses to the commander of their thousands.

24:20

See if your brothers are well and bring some token from them. Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the valley of Elah fighting with the Philistines. And David rose early in the morning and left the sheep with the keeper and took the provisions and went as Jesse had commanded him.

24:37

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 threw 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.

24:53

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. And all the men of Israel, when they saw him, fled from him and were much afraid.

25:11

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.

25:26

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?

25:41

And the people answered him in the same way. So shall it be done to the man who kills him. Now, Eliab, his eldest brother, heard when he spoke to the men. And Eliab's anger was kindled against David.

25:53

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?

26:05

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 as before. Wow, these verses that we just read set the stage for one of the best known events in all of scripture and also in all of history.

26:30

Anyone, everyone who has not even read any part of the Bible knows the story of David and Goliath. Our passage begins by telling us the Philistine army had invaded Judah and they set up their base camp between Socoh and Azekah.

26:46

You can see that in the center of the map. Saul and the army of Israel were encamped in the valley of Elah, which was about 15 miles from Bethlehem, where David tended his father's sheep when he wasn't needed to be was all in the camp.

27:02

When the two armies lined up for battle, they each took the high ground. Philistines stood at the top of one mountain and Israel stood at the top of the other mountain with the valley between them. Now, in verse 4, we all met someone we know really well, but picture yourself in Saul's army.

27:28

Goliath was a surprise, and he's introduced to us as the champion named Goliath of Gath. The word champion comes from the Hebrew word that means the man between two, the man between two. So Goliath stood between two armies as the champion or the representative of the Philistines to fight.

27:53

He is listed at six cubits and a span. Okay, well, a cubit was a distance from a person's elbow to the tip of their longest finger, that's a cubit, and a span was the width of a hand from the thumb to the little finger.

28:11

Obviously, these ancient measurements were not precise, but that would make Goliath around nine-six to nine-nine today. So let me show you something. I'm going to go over here. I had Mickey McDermott measure this cross for me last week.

28:28

If Goliath was standing here on stage with me, his head would go up to about the top of that cross. The cross is nine foot eight, so Goliath's around nine-six to nine-nine. I'm six-one. The height of the average man in that time was five-eight, so the big G was a big boy.

28:54

He came all decked out for war and armed to the teeth. He wore a bronze helmet and a coat of mail that weighed 5,000 shekels of bronze. That's about 125 pounds. Talk about putting on your heavy coat.

29:10

That's a joke. Sometimes I have to identify them for you. Goliath completed his outfit with bronze armor on his legs and then he accessorized with a bronze javelin. The shaft of his spear, he said, is like a weaver's beam.

29:28

That would make it about eight feet long and the head of the spear weighed 600 shekels of iron, so that would be about 15 pounds. So all these details help us understand Goliath was a big, strong, intimidating killer.

29:46

Goliath came forward with his shield bearer, probably not for protection but for size comparison. The Philistines wanted everyone on Israel's side of the valley to clearly see that Goliath towered over his shield bearer, who would have been about the height of everybody in Saul's army.

30:10

The booming voice of Goliath probably echoed across that valley as he shouted, choose a man to fight me to the death. Win or take all, you defeat me we'll be your slaves. I defeat you. You become our slaves.

30:30

Not very polite. How did Saul and the army respond to this brazen challenge? Let's look at verse 11 again. I'll read it to you. When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they had lots of volunteers that wanted to go smack Goliath around.

30:50

Is that what it says? Not quite. It says, no, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. This word dismayed means that they were horrified. They were horrified, in addition to being greatly afraid, which means they were also terrified.

31:11

So they were horrified and terrified. This tells us how frightening Goliath looked because Saul and his army were not wimps. I'm going to turn to two verses out of chapter 14 that we've studied already, but just to remind ourselves of who Saul's army was, verse 47 from chapter 14.

31:29

When Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, against the Ammonites, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines.

31:41

Wherever he turned, he routed them, routed them. Saul and that army was battle-tested and undefeated. They had crushed every enemy they fought. So at the beginning of our

passage when the Philistines lined up for another battle, Saul and his army were completely ready to trounce them again until Goliath showed up.

32:15

Let's look at one more verse in chapter 14. There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul, and when Saul saw any strong man or any valiant man, he attached him to himself. Saul filled his ranks with strong valiant men.

32:32

The word valiant means men that were brave, bold, heroic, and fearless. Saul's army of tough, courageous men were now shaking in their sandals because they had never faced anyone like Goliath before.

32:52

In our study, of 1 Samuel, if we've been paying attention, we've seen how the people of Israel were greatly swayed. They were greatly influenced by outward appearances, right? So when Goliath stepped forward, he had to be their worst nightmare come true.

33:13

Saul was probably the most frightened. Remember chapter 9 told us that Saul was a head taller than everyone in Israel. So he was the logical choice to go fight Goliath as the champion of Israel. But Saul was in no spiritual condition to fight.

33:36

In chapter 14 that we read, Saul was a fierce and victorious military leader because the Spirit of the Lord was with him. But chapter 16, the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul. So Saul had only his own insecure and tormented self to rely on.

33:58

Let's think for a moment about the Philistine's strategy here. They had been slaughtered by Saul and his army in recent battles, right? And here they lined up again, against Saul's vastly superior forces.

34:16

But this time, the Philistines put Goliath out front. So Saul and all his men would focus their attention on him and become demoralized and defeated before the battle even began. Goliath stomped forward to make his challenge for 40 days and nights.

34:41

He did this to prove he wasn't going away. He wasn't going anywhere until someone came over to fight him. Goliath had everyone in Israel looking at him in fear instead of looking to God for the victory.

35:01

If this strategy sounds familiar to you, it's because this is the same strategy Satan uses against you and against me. Haven't we all faced things that have made us so discouraged or feel so small, feel so frightened that we took our eyes off of God?

35:24

Maybe that's where you are today. Let's read a promise from Jesus that he gave to us just before he went to the cross to die for our sins. John 16:33, Jesus said, I have said these things to you that in me you may have peace.

35:48

In the world you will have tribulation, but take heart. I've overcome the world. I've overcome the world. Jesus promises us that peace is readily available. Where is that peace found? In our circumstances?

36:07

No, in our Savior. Peace is found in our Savior. What did Jesus say we will have in this world? A vacation? No, a tribulation. The word tribulation means we will have troubles, worries, afflictions, ordeals, hardships, tragedies, traumas, sufferings, and more.

36:34

Oh boy, oh boy. But Jesus promises us that even in tribulation, or especially in tribulation, regardless of the size, strength, and kind of tribulation. We can find courage. We can find hope. We can find peace by looking to Him who has overcome the world.

36:59

The Greek word here for overcome is a military term. It means to defeat in battle. Jesus has already overcome. Jesus said, take heart. Why should we take heart? Because you and I have this personal power to overcome anything?

37:14

No, we don't have that. Jesus has all the power we don't have. Jesus is triumphed over Satan and his evil forces. Jesus has conquered sin and death. Jesus has faced and defeated all the things that can defeat us.

37:40

That's why we sing. I'm not going to sing it to you. I'm going to quote it. That's why we sing. I can face tomorrow because tomorrow is in your hands. All I need you will provide, just like you always have.

37:53

I'm fighting a battle that you've already won. No matter what comes my way, I will overcome. I don't know what you're doing, but I know what you've done. I'm fighting a battle that you've already won.

38:11

Philistines had a big bronze-covered champion named Goliath who fought for them. You and I have the almighty champion, Christ the Lord, who fights for us. Can I tell you? I claim to that blessed promise every day of my life.

38:35

I hope you do too. In the first part of our passage, we met the hero of the Philistines. Then, in the middle of the passage, here comes the hero of Israel, who arrived on the scene as the most unlikely person person, God would choose to address the elephant in the room, or in this case, the giant in the valley.

38:59

Let's read verses 16 to 18. For forty days the Philistine came forward and took his stand morning and evening. Now we have a change from the valley of Elah to Bethlehem in verse 17. 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.

39:19

Also, take these ten cheeses to the commander of their thousand. See if your brothers are well and bring some token from them. David's three oldest brothers served full time in Saul's army in the valley of Elah while David, the youngest of the family, was a commuter.

39:37

He commuted. He traveled back and forth. He split his time. He was with Saul when Saul needed him and then when Saul was feeling well David could go tend his father's sheep in Bethlehem. David was a young man, probably a teenager, probably a teenager.

39:59

And he was learning a lot about how to handle the weight of responsibility, wasn't he? He successfully held down two important jobs. He served the king and he tended his

father's sheep. The lessons that David learned during this period of his life were gifts from God that would help David face Goliath and then later rule well as the king of Israel.

40:29

God wastes nothing. God wastes nothing. We never know. We can never know how God will use our experiences today, the good ones and the not so good ones, as well as our experiences from the past to prepare us for success in the future he has planned for us.

40:51

From forty days and nights Goliath taunted the army of Israel and at the end of this time David was in Bethlehem and his elderly father Jesse gave him a command. Jesse told David to go back to Saul's camp to bring an ephah that's about six gallons of grain and ten loaves of bread to his brothers and then ten cheeses for their brother's commander and there was urgency from Jesse remember what we read? He told David bring the provisions quickly go go quickly and then come back with word about how your brothers are doing on the front lines.

41:25

At this point in David's young life he was building quite a resume wasn't he he had been anointed as the next king of Israel he had been brought into Saul's inner circle of servants he was a musician he was a shepherd and now he was also a bread and cheese caterer.

41:56

Let's read on verses 19 to 23. Now Saul and they, David's brothers, and all the men of Israel were in the Valley of Elah fighting with the Philistines. 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.

42:13

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, that word baggage means military supplies.

42:29

And David ran to the ranks and went and greeted his brothers. 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.

42:42

And David heard him. David obediently left Bethlehem at the crack of dawn to travel about the 15 or 18 miles he had to go to get to the Valley of Elah just when he got there, just in time to see the army getting ready to go fight with the Philistines.

43:03

They're fighting, this fight they were having was just a war of words so far. So for 40 days, their armies would line up and face each other across the valley and shout war cries at each other. Goliath marched out to make his morning challenge like he had done for over a month.

43:25

But something was different this time. What was different? What was different? For the first time, David, a man of God, was on the front lines to hear him. Let's read on verses 24 to 27. All the men of Israel, when they saw the man Goliath, fled from him and were much afraid.

43:50

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.

44:06

And David said to the man who stood by him, wait what? I added wait. 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 army for the living God?

44:23

And the people answered him in the same way, so shall it be done to the man who kills him. David was there to see his brothers, his big brothers, and the whole army run away in fear of Goliath. To David's dismay, he also heard the soldiers say that the situation had become so desperate that Saul offered a big bribe that included cash, a princess, and a lifetime tax exemption to anyone who would fight and kill Goliath.

45:09

Was David much afraid, like his brothers and all the soldiers were? No, David was not much afraid, he was much mad. He spoke up and said, this arrogant, unbelieving Philistine is mocking our God. Are you telling me that even with a king-sized reward, no one is willing to go do what needs to be done?

45:42

All the men of Israel were focused on just two things, weren't they? They were focused on their fear of Goliath, that was the big number one. But number two, they were also thinking about the material rewards that could be there if someone was stupid, I mean brave enough to go fight the giant.

46:03

No one, no one was thinking about God at all except for the young man that came to bring them some bread and cheese. When David looked at Goliath, he certainly saw the threat, it was impossible to miss.

46:24

But the threat shrank dramatically in David's eyes because David's mind was full of God, his thoughts were full of God. David's heart was tuned to God's heart. David's mind recalled all the promises and faithfulness of God.

46:44

David trusted, David trusted the Lord. So we see here the principle. We cannot trust someone we don't know, right? We can't trust someone we don't know. We can't trust the Lord if we don't know Him. How can we know the Lord like David did?

47:05

How can we know the Lord and trust Him like David did? Well, just like David, we can know the Lord by knowing His Word, by reading it, hearing it, studying it, thinking about it, believing it, treasuring it, obeying it, and remembering it every time we're faced with a new challenge, as we also remember God's faithfulness to us in the past.

47:34

This is what David did. Because he knew the Word of God, he knew the heart of God, and David trusted the Lord with all his heart. So when David heard Goliath, David was strengthened in faith. While, everyone else ran away in fear.

47:54

Let's read the last two verses, three verses. Now, Eliab, his oldest 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?

48:11

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 and toward another and spoke in the same way that the people answered him as before.

48:28

Eliab overheard David. And Eliab responded with a volatile mixture of fear and anger. Maybe Eliab is still jealous that a little brother got selected as the next king instead of him. And maybe Eliab was angry because his baby brother was right and he knew it.

48:53

Eliab said, what are you even doing here, David? Did you just abandon that puny flock of sheep you're supposed to be shepherding? I know your evil heart. You just came to see some bloodshed. Eliab accused David of being grossly irresponsible.

49:15

But our passage told us, no, no, no. David left the sheep with a trusted keeper for their protection. And when David got to camp, the first thing he did was give all those provisions from Jesse to the man in charge of the supplies.

49:30

Then what did he do? Then what did David do? He ran. He ran to the front lines not to see the battle but to find his brothers and talk to them and see how they're doing to obey his father's command. David was not woefully irresponsible.

49:47

David was super responsible in everything he did. Eliab, shamed and belittled his brother in front of everyone and tried to make him feel like an insignificant nobody. But you know what, nobody, nobody is a nobody that trusts in the Lord.

50:10

No such thing as a nobody in God's family. Eliab claimed to know David's heart, but no one can really know another person's heart. What Eliab actually did is he was judging David's heart by the evil in his own heart.

50:29

David had obviously been attacked like this from his big brother before, so David said what a lot of little brothers have said to their big brothers, he goes, what have I done now? Right? What have I done now?

50:42

Why are you mad with me for what I said? Then David turned away from his brother because there's something more important on David's mind than standing there arguing with his brother. David still wanted to know if he was hearing right.

50:56

He wanted to know why the men of Israel were allowing Goliath to brazenly mock the Lord day after day, night after night. David was clearly ready to fight, but the men were certainly not, so they just repeated what they said before.

51:13

David said, why aren't you fighting it? Well, hey, Saul will make anyone really rich that goes down there and silences Goliath forever. So this is where our passage ends. It ends at the very moment when Goliath's defeat was assured because of David's trust in the Lord.

51:39

Goliath didn't know it yet, but he was going to have a very bad day. Be sure you come back next week for the famous fight, okay? If, let me just leave you with this, if David had given in to the fear of the big Philistine or fear of his big brother, David's faith would have faltered.

52:06

Fear can really weaken us, can't it? Fear, fear can really, really do a number on us, can really weaken us. But, but the antidote, the antidote for fear is faith in our trustworthy almighty God. David, I mean, we know what happens, we have a book that tells us but David didn't know the future, he just knew the Lord and he trusted him no matter what, and so can we, and so can we.

52:46

Yeah. Jesus is right, life is full of tribulation, but do you know what that means for us who follow Jesus? What does it mean that life is full of tribulation to us? What does that mean for us? It means life is full of opportunities for peace and victory as we learn to trust Jesus as our champion every day for everything.

53:13

Our prayer team is going to be down here to pray with you if you would like prayer for anything going on in your life today, maybe something that's troubling you, something weighty coming your way. We also have a prayer wall.

53:29

If you just go right out the door and to your right, you'll see the prayer wall there. You can write your requests and tuck it in the box and our prayer warriors will be praying for you. Let's pray together.

53:43

Father, wow, we thank you for your word that is the shining light we need for our path through this dark, dark, dark, scary world. Thank you. There's no word. Thank you, it seems small, but it's the best one we've got.

54:02

Thank you for sending Jesus to be our champion who fights for us and he has already won. Lord, when we look at our troubles, when we just focus our attention on our troubles, we see lots of reasons to feel small and scared.

54:20

But when we look to you like David did, we find peace and strength in you. Help us all understand that David was human just like us and the God he trusted was you, our God, and the Spirit that filled David is your Holy Spirit that fills us.

54:40

So we can, we can, like David, be people that learn to trust you always in all things. Lord Jesus, we love you and it's in your all-powerful name we pray. Amen.