

# David and Goliath

*(abridged from 1 Samuel 17, English Standard Version)*

Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle. And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered drew up in line of battle against the Philistines. And the Philistines stood on the mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits<sup>1</sup> and a span. 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 five thousand shekels<sup>2</sup> of bronze. And he had bronze armor on his legs, and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I 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." When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

Now David was the son of Jesse, who had eight sons and was already old and advanced in years. David was the youngest. The three eldest followed Saul, but David went back and forth from Saul to feed his father's sheep. 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 this grain, and these ten loaves. See if your brothers are well, and bring some token from them."

David came to the encampment as the Israelites and the Philistines drew up for battle, army against army. And David ran to the ranks and went and greeted his brothers. As he talked with them, the champion, 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 fled from him and were much afraid. 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 Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

When the words that David spoke were heard, they repeated them before Saul, and he sent for him. And David said to Saul, "Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." And Saul said

---

<sup>1</sup> A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters.

<sup>2</sup> A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

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. Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God. 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!"

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.

When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained 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?" 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. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand."

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. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.