

David and Goliath

Scripture Reference: [1 Samuel 17](#)



Suggested Emphasis: Trust the Lord.

Memory Verse: But the person who trusts in the Lord will be blessed. The Lord will show him that he can be trusted. [Jeremiah 17:7, ICB](#)



Story Overview:

David's older brothers went to fight battles with King Saul while David stayed home and cared for his father's sheep. When David went to take food to his brothers, he was appalled to find that the whole army was afraid of the Philistines. Every day a huge soldier, Goliath, came forward and mocked the Lord and his army. David trusted in the Lord's strength and knew that the Lord would help him defeat Goliath. David used his sling and killed Goliath with a stone right between his eyes.

Background Study:

David's conquering Goliath was a turning point in David's life. The events of 1 Samuel 17 probably occurred after David played his harp to soothe Saul (1 Samuel 16:18-20, 23; 1 Samuel 17:15) but before he was one of Saul's armour-bearers (1 Samuel 16:21, 22).

The Philistines, the Israelites' enemies during the reign of King Saul, worshipped many gods. They did not respect

the Lord God of Israel.

The Philistines had a heavily guarded secret that made their army superior to that of the Israelites - they knew how to make iron. This secret was so closely guarded that people from other nations would travel many miles to the Philistine metal workers and pay huge sums of money to purchase ploughs or tools made of iron to use on their farms. The bronze and copper swords used by the Israelite army were no match for the stronger iron swords and weapons used by the Philistines.

Until Saul became king of Israel, there was no official Israelite army. There were farmers and shepherds who only grouped together to fight when they were attacked. King Saul kept a small army of about 3000 men. Whenever the situation called for more soldiers, Saul would send a message to each tribe to send men (who were untrained) to help out.

It was common practice in ancient times for two nations preparing to fight to make their camps near the battlefield. At daybreak, if all went as usual, the two armies would line up facing each other on the battlefield. The commanders would order the attack, and the battle would continue until one army killed or drove off the other army. Israel and King Saul were prepared for this type of battle.

The Philistines wanted a different type of battle. The giant, Goliath, proposed that one man of Israel fight him to determine which nation was superior. Every day for forty days, twice a day, Goliath came down into the valley between the two armies and challenged an Israelite to come and fight him. But the Israelites were afraid of him.

Goliath was not proposing this new thing - having one champion fight for the entire army. But when ancient armies did this, they tried to use such formidable war equipment that the challenger had the advantage from the beginning. And Goliath was a terrifying sight! His description indicates that he was more than nine feet tall, wore a bronze coat of armour (like fish scales) that weighed 125 pounds, a bronze helmet for his head and bronze greaves that protected his legs from knees to ankles, and he carried a huge javelin (spear) as his weapon that had an iron point weighing about 15 pounds. In addition, an armour-bearer walked in front of him (probably another giant.)

When David saw and heard Goliath, he was indignant! David wanted to fight Goliath, but he had to overcome some obstacles: the army's fear, his brother's insults, Saul's discouragement, and the fact that Goliath was better equipped. When David heard Goliath's challenge, he was outraged that this heathen should dare to challenge the Lord's army. He was even more upset that no one trusted God enough to accept the challenge. So he went to King Saul and said that with God's help, he would defeat Goliath. Perhaps the Spirit of the Lord was evident in David's manner because David's trust in God convinced King Saul.

Evidently, Goliath felt disdain for this shepherd coming to fight him in the name of the Lord. David was very proficient with a sling. After acknowledging God was his helper, David hit the giant on the forehead with a stone. The giant fell, and David ran to him, pulled out Goliath's sword, killed him with it, and cut off his head. The Philistine army ran away, and God's people were triumphant.



Way to Introduce the Story:

Bring a measuring tape to class today. Let the children measure to see how high the ceiling is. If one of the walls is nine feet tall, then mark that height. "How would you like to be that tall? Did you know that there was someone in the bible who was even taller than that? We are going to talk about him today."

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The Story:

Even though God had chosen David to be the next king, people did not know about him yet. David knew that the Lord would tell him when it was the right time to be king. For now, Saul was still the king of Israel.

Saul led his army to battle against their enemies, the Philistines. The Philistines did not believe in God, and they did not like God's people. The Philistines wanted to kill the Israelites.

King Saul's army made their camp on one hill and the Philistine army on the other. There was a valley in between them. Every morning and every evening, a huge Philistine named Goliath would come into the valley and yell at the Israelites.

"The Philistines are better than the Israelites," Goliath would shout. "Choose a man and have him come down and fight me. If he can kill me then we will become your slaves. If I kill him then the Israelites must become slaves to the Philistines."

Goliath did this every day for forty days. The Israelites were frightened, and no one wanted to fight the giant man. He was over nine feet tall and had a bronze helmet and bronze armour. He had a huge spear, and he even had a servant who walked before him carrying a shield.

David was not in Saul's army. He still stayed out in his father's pastures taking care of sheep. David's three oldest brothers did fight with Saul, though. Their father, Jesse, would often send David to take food and supplies to the three brothers.

This time, when David arrived at the army's camp with supplies, he was surprised at what he saw. He arrived just in time to see Goliath come out and make his challenge. David could not believe that anyone would talk about God in such a bad way. David knew that God was stronger than Goliath. God is stronger than anyone! David heard some soldiers say that whoever was brave enough to fight Goliath would win many prizes from King Saul. His father would never have to pay taxes to the king. The king would let the winner marry his daughter, and he would give him great wealth. When David asked the soldiers about Goliath, his brothers overheard him and became angry.

"Why don't you go back to watching the sheep," they said. "Let us fight the battles."

But David had an idea. David went to King Saul and told him he wanted to fight Goliath. David told the king how the Lord always helped him. When a bear had carried off one of his father's sheep, David had chased it and hit it. The bear died. The Lord also gave him the strength to fight lions when they tried to kill the sheep.

"I know I am not a soldier but I know that God will help me fight the giant. I trust in God and God is stronger than any bears, lions, giants or spears."

King Saul listened to what David said. Saul believed David when he said he trusted in God. King Saul told David that he could fight Goliath. He even gave David his own armour and sword. But when David tried them on and walked around, he knew he could not wear the king's armour. He had never been trained to use them, and they only made walking hard for him. David decided to fight Goliath using only his sling.

David went down to a stream and collected five smooth stones. With a sling, stones, and trust in the Lord, David was ready to face the enemy.

When Goliath saw David, he started making fun of him. He also started making fun of God. He told David that he would kill him and feed him to the birds. David still trusted in the Lord. He told Goliath, "You come against me with sword and spear but I come against you

in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. Today I will kill you and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel.”

As Goliath moved closer to attack David, David ran toward him quickly and put one of the stones in his sling. He swung the swing round and round and released the stone straight at Goliath’s forehead. The stone hit Goliath, and he fell to the ground. David killed Goliath with Goliath’s own sword.

When the Philistines saw that a boy had killed Goliath, their hero, they all began to run away. The army of Israel won the battle. They won because David trusted in the Lord.

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Click here to download these illustrations and slideshow.](#) Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing, so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Review Questions:

1. Who was the giant that made fun of God and the Israelite army? Goliath
2. Who killed Goliath? David
3. How did David kill Goliath? He used his sling to hit Goliath with a small stone on the forehead.
4. How was a boy able to kill a giant? He trusted in the Lord

Song Suggestions:

- [Only a Boy Named David Song](#)
- [My God is So Big Song](#)
- [Books of the Old Testament Song](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

Activities:

- Make a sling and go outside and find five smooth stones. Practice shooting the sling.
- “Practice” shooting a sling by having the children wind up a few times and then let loose of the imaginary sling.
- Target practice could be fun. A rubber ball, haki-sak or bean bag would work well if you are inside. You could set up small paper cups for soldiers and add one very large cup representing Goliath.
- Draw a large picture of Goliath on the chalk/whiteboard with a bulls-eye on his forehead. Let the children throw Ping-Pong balls at it.
- Measure off the actual height of Goliath (17:4).
- Bring scales to class and compare the children’s weight with that of Goliath’s armour (17:5-7). Calculate the

weights: a shekel is approximately 11.5 grams or 2/5 of an ounce.

- Use bible reference books to look up information and pictures of the weapons and armour.
- Bring a selection of various stones to class. Younger children will enjoy examining the stones and then taking turns selecting their own. If possible, each child should have five stones to take home.
- Older children might have fun working out sound effects for the story. For review, one child can retell the story while others make the sound effects.
- Children can take turns being blindfolded and led around the room by another child. Talk about how the blindfolded person has to trust the leader. We should trust God.

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for "David and Goliath" printables to print on A4 size paper](#)
[Click here for "David and Goliath" printables \(Letter size-USA\)](#)

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Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page with text \(Ministry Spark\)](#)
- [Colouring page \(Christian answers\)](#)
- [Craft: Instructions to make a paper pouch for David's 5 stones \(Sola publishing\)](#)
- [Craft: David puppet \(Sunday school crafts\)](#)
- [Craft: Doorknob hanger \(Sunday school crafts\)](#)
- [Craft: Youtube clip showing a shepherd's sling similar to what David might have used.](#)
- [Game: Easy stone toss game. Based on the game "marbles". \(DLTK\)](#)
- [Game: Pin the stone on Goliath. \(DLTK\)](#)
- [Snack: "Stone" cookies: \(Church house collections\)](#)

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