

Third Presbyterian Church  
Midweek Bible Study  
I Samuel - Chapter 17  
Fight with What you Know

1 Samuel 17:32-54 (NIV) David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." [33] Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a boy, and he has been a fighting man from his youth." [34] But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, [35] I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. [36] Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. [37] The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you." [38] Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. [39] David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them. "I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off. [40] Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine. [41] Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. [42] He looked David over and saw that he was only a boy, ruddy and handsome, and he despised him. [43] He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. [44] "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" [45] David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. [46] This day the Lord will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. [47] All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands." [48] As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. [49] Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground. [50] So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand, he struck down the Philistine and killed him. [51] David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the scabbard. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran. [52] Then the men of Israel and Judah surged forward with a shout and pursued the Philistines to the entrance of Gath and to the gates of Ekron. Their dead were strewn along the Shay-a-rayim road to Gath and Ekron. [53] When the Israelites returned from chasing the Philistines, they plundered their camp. [54] David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, and he put the Philistine's weapons in his own tent.

1. When you read David saying “The Battle is the Lords” discuss what that means to you in this context and in your own personal context in a way that it navigates how you fight?
2. Explain what the sermons means when it says there is no such thing as “bad” news only Faith Building Moments.
  - A. Discuss a faith building movement in your life that God brought you through?
  - B. How does a lack of faith in God undermine our ability to fight our Goliaths in our lives?
3. Why so people tend to listen to others on a matter that they themselves are failing or insufficient? For example, getting financial advice from someone who owes you money.
  - A. How do you feel God would respond to that behavior?
4. Why is sharing our testimony of God fighting for us and winning helpful in sharing with other Christians.
5. Why does gaining earthly things cause some to get a sense they don’t need God or are inclined to follow someone/something else?
  - A. How do we avoid this trap?
6. Why do people feel the need to constantly “cheerlead” for the devil when something does not go according to their plan?.. “the devil sho is busy.” What is the point of this statement?
7. Why does bragging about the past undermine our ability to fight in the present.
8. Why is it so important to realize we are not fighting against an actual person but the spirit that is controlling them.
  - A. How does this truth change the way we interact/treat/engage those who come against us as enemies?
9. Share your main takeaway from the sermon and the lesson?

## **B. The Story of David and Goliath: Defeating the Oppressor of God's People, 17:1-58**

**(17:1-58) Introduction— Victory, Source— Conquest, Assurance— Triumph, Source:** enemies can be defeated. And any oppressor, whether a person or some trial, can be conquered. Victory and triumph are promised to the person who will trust God and call upon Him for power and help.

One of the most famous stories in all the Bible, the story of David and Goliath, teaches us this great lesson. The story is a captivating drama that attracts both the storyteller and the hearer. Furthermore, it is one of the most well-known stories in all literature. Overcoming impossible odds, the young boy David defeated a mighty warrior who stood over nine feet tall. An impossible feat, yet through the power of God David did the impossible. And because of his victory, he stands as a dynamic example before the world—an example of what can be accomplished by the person who truly believes in God. David teaches us that we can defeat any oppressor and conquer any enemy through the power of God. This is: *The Story of David and Goliath: Defeating the Oppressor of God's People, 17:1-58.*

1. The war launched by the Philistines and the defiance of Goliath: confronting an aggressive, frightening enemy (v.1-11).
2. The family of David and his duties as a youth: the picture of a very responsible young boy (v.12-15).
3. The righteous anger of David over Goliath's defiance and Israel's fear: a need for courage (v.16-30).
4. The utter trust of David in God: His power to deliver (v.31-39).
5. The victory of David over Goliath: God's power to overcome the oppressor of His people (v.40-58).

**1. (17:1-11) Fear, of Enemy— War, of Israel— Philistines, Conflict with Israel— Defiance, Example of— Hostility, Example of— Goliath, Defiance of— Spiritual Warfare, Symbolized by Philistines:** there was the war launched by the Philistines and the defiance of Goliath. This is a clear picture of the believer confronting an aggressive, defiant, frightening enemy. This is only one of many conflicts between the Philistines and Israel throughout Saul's reign, for the Philistines were bitter enemies of God's people (13:1-23; 14:1-52; 14:47; 14:52). In this present passage, the Philistines again launched an invasion against Israel:

1. The Philistines invaded Israel at Shochoh, which was located about fifteen miles west of Bethlehem in the territory of Judea (2 Chronicles 28:18). They actually pitched their camp at Ephes-dammim, which was between Shochoh and Azekah.

The invasion was immediately countered by Saul and his army. They camped in the valley of Elah. Thus the battle lines were drawn: the armies faced each other on opposite hills surrounding the valley (1 Samuel 17:2-3). Picture the scene: there were the Israelite forces, thousands and thousands of soldiers, battalion after battalion, standing in their battle lines. Opposite them was an invading army of thousands who bitterly hated the Israelites and sought to enslave and subject them to serve the Philistine nation. The Israelite forces knew they were in a fight for their very survival. A spirit of apprehension and fear was bound to be gripping their hearts. But an even greater fear was about to surge through their veins, a paralyzing fear.

2. All of a sudden, a frightening, giant warrior named Goliath stepped forth from the Philistine ranks crying out a hostile challenge to the Israelites (1 Samuel 17:4-10). Note the terrifying description given of this giant warrior:

- ⇒ He was approximately nine feet nine inches tall (1 Samuel 17:4).
- ⇒ His armor consisted of a bronze helmet, a coat of scale armor weighing about 125 pounds (1 Samuel 17:5), and a pair of bronze leggings (1 Samuel 17:6).
- ⇒ His weapons were a bronze spear with a fifteen-pound tip, a sword, and a javelin (1 Samuel 17:7, 45).
- ⇒ His shield was carried by an armor-bearer who walked before him (1 Samuel 17:7).

Standing there in the valley, Goliath presented an awesome appearance. He was a mighty warrior who could overpower any enemy. Then he spoke, crying out in defiance, mocking and ridiculing the Israelites: Why did they line up to fight when not a single soldier would come out to face him (1 Samuel 17:8)? He shouted out a hostile challenge, that of representative combat: that is, that the mightiest warrior of Israel fight a personal dual with him, Goliath. This dual would be a representative war with the nation of the loser becoming subject to the winner, serving the winning nation (1 Samuel 17:9-10).

3. The defiance and appearance of Goliath as a mighty warrior paralyzed the Israelite army. A chilling, unnerving fear gripped their hearts. The Israelites were shaken, terrorized by Goliath.

**Thought 1.** Enemy after enemy confronts us as we walk throughout life. Sometimes these enemies are defiant and frightening, and we feel overpowered and overwhelmed. These enemies may be...

- people who ridicule, mock, oppose, bypass, ignore, abuse, assault, curse, lie, or steal
- circumstances that create all kinds of trials, temptations, accidents, disease, financial difficulty, depression, discouragement, purposelessness, or the death of a loved one

Enemies that overwhelm us can be persons or trials or temptations. As we walk throughout life we will face enemies, defiant and frightening enemies, who will seek to oppress and defeat us. Listen to what the Word of God says about our conflict with these enemies:

**"And the LORD said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat" (Luke 22:31).**

**"And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Romans 13:11-12).**

**"(For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).**

**"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Ephesians 6:10-13).**

**2. (17:12-15) Responsible, Example of— Trustworthy, Example of— Faithful, Example of— Obedience, Example of— David, Family of— David, as a Child:** there was the family of David and his duties as a youth. He was a very responsible, obedient young boy. This is the first time the roots or genealogy of David has been given. The picture of David as a young shepherd boy is also gleaned from this passage:

1. David's father was Jesse, an Ephrathite, one of the important families or clans in the tribe of Judah (1 Samuel 17:12; 1 Chronicles 2:19; 4:4). The family lived in Bethlehem. Jesse had eight sons, and by the time of Saul's reign Jesse was already an elderly man. His three oldest sons had enlisted in the army and were serving under Saul's command in the war with the Philistines. The names of these sons are given: the firstborn, Eliab; the second, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah (1 Samuel 17:13). David was the youngest son (1 Samuel 17:14). Note what David's duties were during the days after his enlistment by Saul to serve in his court: he went back and forth between working for Saul and tending his father's sheep in Bethlehem (1 Samuel 17:15; 16:11). Apparently, he was not yet twenty years of age, the minimum age for military service in Israel (Numbers 1:3).

**Thought 1.** The lesson for us is that of responsible service, of doing a good job with the task assigned to us. No matter what the task is—carrying out the trash, making up the bed, working at our employment, fighting a war, or serving the LORD—we must be responsible. We must be diligent and faithful, wholeheartedly performing the task or work. This is the teaching of God's Holy Word:

**"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the LORD" (Romans 12:11).**

**"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2).**

**"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the LORD" (1 Corinthians 15:58).**

**"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1).**

**3. (17:16-30) Anger, Justified, Example of— Courage, Example of— David, Courage of— Goliath, Defiance of— David, Confrontation with Goliath— Jealousy, Example of, David's Brother:** there was the righteous anger of David over Goliath's defiance and Israel's fear. This is a descriptive picture showing the need for courage among God's people:

1. For forty long, frightful days and nights Goliath defied the army of Israel. Every morning and evening during the forty days, Goliath stepped forth into the valley below mocking, ridiculing, and taunting the Israelites. Gripped by fear, Saul and his troops were shaken and terrorized. They became a paralyzed army. No man, not even Saul who stood a head taller than any other Israelite, dared to step forth to engage Goliath in hand-to-hand combat. A standoff between the two armies had developed. But note what was taking place behind the scenes.

2. A very special duty was being assigned to David by his father (1 Samuel 17:17-19). David's father charged him to take supplies to the front lines and to check on the welfare of his brothers. Note that the supplies were also for the commander of their unit. Soldiers of that day usually lived off the land that they occupied or else supplies and rations were sent to them by family members who remained at home.

3. David was obedient, faithful to his father's instructions (1 Samuel 17:20-22). When early morning arrived, he left for the battlefield, leaving the sheep with another shepherd. David arrived just as the troops were going out to their daily battle positions (1 Samuel 17:21). He immediately took the provisions to the supply officer, then ran to the front lines to check on his brothers (1 Samuel 17:22).

4. While talking with his brothers, David caught his very first sight of Goliath (1 Samuel 17:23-24). He saw the giant soldier step out from the Philistine ranks and shout out his terrorizing challenge. And David witnessed the paralyzing effect on the Israelite forces: they all shrunk back and ran away in fright.

5. Desperately needing a courageous volunteer to accept Goliath's challenge, Saul had offered an enormous reward to any soldier who killed Goliath (1 Samuel 17:25). The reward included great wealth, his own daughter in marriage, and tax exemption for the soldier's entire family.

6. A deep concern and righteous anger were aroused in David when he saw Goliath defy Israel's troops and saw the soldiers flee from him (1 Samuel 17:26-27). He was angered at the insult hurled at Israel, the armies of the Living God. By insulting the army of Israel, Goliath was insulting and defying God Himself. This disturbed David deeply as he stood there listening to such insults and curses against the Living God. Suddenly a surge of courage was aroused within the heart of David. He asked the men standing near him what would be done for the man who stepped forth and killed this Philistine, stopping this reproach, this abuse upon Israel. In anger, he asked just who this uncircumcised, pagan Philistine thought he was, that he should defy the armies of the Living God. In response to David's question, the soldiers standing nearby spelled out the reward that Saul had promised to give to the soldier who killed Goliath (1 Samuel 17:27).

7. Seeing the bold anger arising within David and hearing David ask the courageous questions irritated the older brother Eliab (1 Samuel 17:28-30). After all, David was the youngest brother, not even old enough to enter military service; yet here he was, demonstrating a bold and courageous anger that suggested he could face Goliath. Obviously, Eliab was jealous of the courage shown by David. Consequently, he made three accusations against David:

- ⇒ He accused David of pride, of having a haughty spirit.
- ⇒ He accused David of neglecting his duty, suggesting that he should be back home tending the sheep.
- ⇒ He accused David of a wicked curiosity, of coming just to watch the battle take place.

Keep in mind that Samuel had rejected Eliab as future king of Israel and had appointed David instead, and the older brother had witnessed the secret anointing (16:6-13). Moreover, David had already been taken into the

court of Saul to serve the king. An irritating jealousy had obviously captured the heart of the older brother. As a result, witnessing the bold, courageous anger of David against Goliath only deepened the jealousy within Eliab.

But note the firm response of David to his older brother (1 Samuel 17:29-30). He asked what he had done to irritate Eliab. Was he not even allowed to speak, to ask questions? David was insisting that the cause, the issue being discussed was important. Turning away to someone else, David continued to discuss the issues of Goliath's defiance and the promises of reward made by Saul.

**Thought 1.** Courage—bold courage—is desperately needed as we face the enemies of this life. Shrinking back and running from enemies will only lead to humiliation, defeat, destruction, and sometimes even death. All kinds of enemies will confront and threaten us as we walk throughout life:

- ⇒ trials and temptations
- ⇒ unfavorable circumstances and difficult problems
- ⇒ persecution and hatred
- ⇒ hardship and misfortune
- ⇒ criminals and terrorists
- ⇒ mockers and slanderers
- ⇒ evil men and warmongers

We must therefore be noble and stir up a spirit of courage and boldness. We must arouse a strong determination to conquer and triumph over the enemy. A bold, courageous spirit that depends upon the LORD will conquer all enemies and live a victorious life. This is the promise of God's Holy Word:

**"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Corinthians 16:13).**

**"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might"**

**(Ephesians 6:10).**

**"Only let your conversation [behavior, conduct] be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God" (Philippians 1:27-28).**

**4. (17:31-39) Faith, Example of— Trust, Example of— Confidence, Example of— David, Faith of— God, Power, Faith in— Power, God, Trust in:** there was David's utter trust in God, in His power to deliver him and God's people from their enemies, Goliath and the Philistines. Note the Scripture and outline:

1. David's courage and outrage against the blasphemies of Goliath were reported to King Saul (1 Samuel 17:31). After forty days, and having no one else with the courage to step forward, Saul wanted to talk with this young man who was showing such bold anger against the defiance of Goliath. Thus, Saul summoned David to the royal command quarters.

2. Standing before Saul, David demonstrated a strong confidence, declaring that the army should not lose heart, not let their hearts fail them. He personally would go and fight Goliath.

3. Instantly, Saul rejected David's offer, exclaiming that he was only a boy caught up in the youthful idealism and excitement of warfare (1 Samuel 17:33). His engaging in hand-to-hand combat was an impossibility, for Goliath was a trained, experienced soldier and he only a shepherd boy.

4. But David was gripped by a determination, apparently from the LORD: he humbly but strongly argued that he had the very experience that could defeat Goliath (1 Samuel 17:34-35). True, he was only a shepherd, but he had already been engaged in mortal combat: he had faced bears and lions. When a lion or bear caught and carried off a sheep, he had pursued the creature. With only a club in his hand, he would snatch the lamb from the mouth of the creature. And if the animal turned on him, he would seize its hair and club it to death.

5. But even more important than his combat experience with bears and lions, David boldly declared his confidence and trust in God. With God's help, fighting the unbelieving Goliath would be no more dangerous than fighting the lion or the bear (1 Samuel 17:36-37). The *Living God* would make it so, for Goliath had defied both the Living God and His armies. Just as the LORD had delivered him from the paws of the lion and bear, He would deliver him from the hand of Goliath (1 Samuel 17:37). The LORD had the power to deliver him, and he was convinced that the LORD would infuse His power into him. He would be empowered to defeat Goliath. This was the strong trust and faith David had in the *Living God*.

Seeing David's bold determination and hearing of his courageous experiences against the ferocious beasts of the wilderness, Saul finally agreed to let him go to fight Goliath. In sharing his decision with David, he uttered a brief blessing that no doubt was also intended to be a prayer, asking the LORD to be with the young shepherd boy.

Note that Saul demonstrated a trust in the armor of men: he gave David his armor and sword. But David felt uncomfortable, burdened down because he was not used to wearing such heavy protective armor. Explaining his awkwardness to Saul, he removed the armor.

**Thought 1.** David's faith, his trust in God, is a dynamic example for us. David's trust challenges us to trust God. God has the power to deliver us from all enemies. No matter who or what the enemy is, God can and will deliver us. But we must trust God, have faith in him. If we believe in God and trust God to empower us, He will infuse His power within us. God will strengthen us to withstand and conquer any trial or temptation. But we must always remember that belief—trusting God—is an absolute essential. Listen to the exhortations of God's Holy Word:

**"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:15-16).**

**"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).**

**"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Ephesians 6:16).**

**"But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6).**

**5. (17:40-58) Victory, over Enemies, Example of— Conquest, of Enemies, Example of— Spiritual Warfare, Deliverance from— David, Victories of— Goliath, Defeated by David:** there was the victory of David over Goliath. This is a clear picture of God's power to overcome the enemy, the oppressor of His people. A graphic description is pictured of this famous combat, this stunning victory of David over Goliath:

1. David's weapons were those of a shepherd: a staff, a sling, stones, and a pouch to hold the stones. David reached down and picked up five stones from a stream and put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag. Then, armed only with his staff and sling, he began to approach Goliath.

2. Note the strategy and advance of Goliath (1 Samuel 17:41-44). He began to advance with his shield-bearer in front of him. As he moved forward, he mocked and ridiculed David, despising him because the Israelites had sent only a small boy to fight him, the famous warrior of the Philistines. And they had equipped the small boy with only a staff as a weapon (1 Samuel 17:42-43).

To some degree, Goliath felt insulted, for he was a famous warrior; and to defeat a young boy such as David armed only with a staff could become the target of jokes among the soldiers and citizens of the Philistines.

Consequently, Scripture says that Goliath disdained, despised David, holding him in contempt. He began to curse David by the name of his false gods, and he shouted a boastful threat: that he would kill David and feed his flesh to the birds and beasts of the field (1 Samuel 17:43-44).

3. Note the strategy and advance of David (1 Samuel 17:45-49). Unmoved by the defiance and threats of Goliath, David launched a verbal counterattack. He shouted out the difference between him and Goliath: that Goliath trusted in his man-made weapons, the weapons of sword and spear and javelin. But he, David, trusted in *the LORD of hosts*, the "LORD Almighty"—the God of the armies of Israel whom Goliath had defied (1 Samuel 17:45). Then David shouted out that the victory would be the LORD's. The LORD would enable David to strike Goliath down and even cut off his head. Moreover, the LORD would give a great victory over the Philistine army, and the carcasses of the army would be given to the birds of the air and the beasts of the fields.

Note what David then shouted out: he declared that this event would become historically famous, that it would have an impact upon the whole world (1 Samuel 17:46-47). By the victory God was going to give David, the world would know that the LORD is the only living and true God. And the world would know that it is not by military might that the LORD saves. The LORD saves by the might of His own power (1 Samuel 17:47).

Suddenly, the verbal assaults were over, and all the defiance that could be uttered had been shouted out by each combatant. They were almost within range of each other's weapons. Unexpectedly—quickly and abruptly—David broke into a run toward Goliath, zigzagging and maneuvering all about, rapidly swirling his slingshot. Then with ferocious, deadly force, he slung a stone through the air, striking and sinking into Goliath's forehead, causing the giant to fall facedown on the ground (1 Samuel 17:49).

4. Just as quickly as the conflict had begun, David had gained a quick, stunning victory over Goliath (1 Samuel 17:50-51). He had triumphed over the enemy without a sword, using only a sling and a stone.

Quickly David ran and stood over Goliath (1 Samuel 17:51). He stripped Goliath of his sword and thrust it through the giant's body, making sure the brutal enemy was dead. Then using Goliath's own sword, David cut off the head of the giant. Witnessing the quick defeat and death of their hero, the Philistine army was utterly shocked and stricken with panic. Hurriedly, they fled the battlefield in utter confusion.

5. Now note the crushing victory of Israel and Judah over the Philistine army (1 Samuel 17:52-53). Excited over witnessing David's quick defeat of Goliath, the Israelites shouted out the joy of their triumph. And being encouraged by the strong faith and courage of David, they rushed forth and chased the Philistines all the way to the gates of their coastal cities, Gath and Ekron. They executed every soldier they were able to catch, and the dead and wounded lay all along the road right up to the city gates of the two cities. Once the enemy had fled behind their fortified walls, the Israelites returned from chasing the Philistines and plundered their camp (1 Samuel 17:53).

6. A foreshadowing of David's military spirit then emerged: he hung Goliath's head in Jerusalem (1 Samuel 17:54). Just why he did this is not stated. But most likely it was for the purpose of intimidation, to strike fear in the heart of any enemy who entertained thoughts of attacking Israel. As for Goliath's weapons, David kept them as a personal trophy of his victory.

7. Earlier Saul had watched David march out to meet Goliath, wondering who this courageous young man was. He asked Abner, who was the commander of the army, but Abner did not know. Thus Saul charged Abner to find out (1 Samuel 17:56). Consequently, right after the combat was over, Abner brought David to Saul.

Note the scene: standing before King Saul, David was still holding Goliath's head (1 Samuel 17:57). It would be interesting to know what the thoughts of Saul were. Here was this courageous young man standing before him with the head of the giant he had just slain. And the courageous young man had just achieved a victory that had delivered King Saul and his army from utter devastation at the hands of the Philistines. Saul wanted to know what any ruler—or for that matter what any person—would want to know. Just who was this young man who had more courage than an army of over 200,000 soldiers? Of course, Saul had met David earlier when he enlisted him to be his harpist (16:18-21), but Saul did not remember David, for that had been several years earlier when David was just a young boy, perhaps no more than twelve years old. Now he was probably somewhere around sixteen to eighteen years old. Moreover, David's services as a harpist had been needed only occasionally by Saul and most likely had been for only a brief period of time. This seems to be indicated by the



fact that David had been back home tending sheep for his father (1 Samuel 17:15). Whatever the case, Saul obviously did not remember David as one of the young men serving in his court.

King Saul also needed to know who the father of David was. As soon as David was brought into his presence, King Saul asked him for the identity of his father. It was necessary for Saul to gain knowledge of the family, for David had earned the right to marry his daughter. Furthermore, the entire family was to be exempted from taxes. The *conquering hero* David had earned the rewards promised by King Saul.

**Thought 1.** God will give us the power to conquer all enemies. All the trials and temptations of this life can be conquered, even the climatic trial of death itself. Through the power of God, we can walk through any trial or temptation, conquering and triumphing over all. Victory is ours through the power of God.

**"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37).**

**"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**

**"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25).**

**Thought 2.** Robert D. Bergen has an excellent statement on Goliath that is well worth quoting in full:

*As David viewed it, Goliath was outnumbered and would soon be overpowered, for the Lord would fight with David against the giant. In the battle that would occur "this day" (1 Samuel 17:46), the Lord would "hand [Goliath] over" to David; then for his part the young shepherd would "strike [Goliath] down and cut off [his] head." David's efforts would not be limited to slaying Goliath; he also would slaughter and humiliate the Philistine army. Yet the Philistines would not die in vain. In fact, their destruction would serve a high theological purpose; it would be a revelatory event by which "the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel" (cf. Josh 2:10-11). Achieving a depth of insight remarkable for a person of any age, young David perceived that the events of this day would give rise to narrative accounts that would reveal the Lord's power and reality to all who might hear them. Eyewitnesses to the ensuing battle would learn an additional truth from the Lord, "that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves, for the battle is the LORD's" (1 Samuel 17:47; cf. 2:9-10; 13:22; Jeremiah 9:23-24; Zechariah 4:6).*

*David, the Lord's anointed one, discerned a theological purpose in warfare. This perspective is one that must be examined because it is of utmost importance for understanding the mind-set of orthodox Israelites in the Old Testament. For David—and, we judge, for all Old Testament Israelites of true faith in God—armed conflict was fundamentally a religious event. Only when the Lord willed it were Israelites under David's command to engage in it (cf. 2 Sam 5:19). And when the Lord ordained battle for David's troops, it was to be performed in accordance with divine directives (cf. 2 Sam 5:23-25). Furthermore, because soldiers were performing God's work, only individuals who were in a state of ritual purity were to participate in military missions (cf. 1 Sam 21:5). The Lord was the one who gave victory to David and his troops in battle (cf. 1 Sam 17:47; 2 Sam 22:30, 36, 51), and thus the Lord alone was worthy of praise for David's and Israel's military successes (2 Sam 22:47-48).*