

DAVID AND GOLIATH

[BIBLE TEXT](#) : I Samuel 17:1-58

LESSON 211 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "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 6:13).

[BIBLE TEXT in King James Version](#)

1 Samuel 17:1-58

¹ Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which *belongeth* to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephesdammim.

² And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines.

³ And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and *there was* a valley between them.

⁴ And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height *was* six cubits and a span.

⁵ And *he had* an helmet of brass upon his head, and he *was* armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat *was* five thousand shekels of brass.

⁶ And *he had* greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders.

⁷ And the staff of his spear *was* like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head *weighed* six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him.

⁸ And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set *your* battle in array? *am* not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.

⁹ If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us.

¹⁰ And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.

¹¹ When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

¹² Now David *was* the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehemjudah, whose name *was* Jesse; and he had eight sons: and the man went among men *for* an old man in the days of Saul.

¹³ And the three eldest sons of Jesse went *and* followed Saul to the battle: and the names of his three sons that went to the battle *were* Eliab the firstborn, and next unto him Abinadab, and the third Shammah.

[BIBLE REFERENCES:](#)

I The Champion of the Philistines

1 The armies of Israel and the Philistines are set in battle array, I Samuel 17:1-3

2 Goliath, a giant about 9 feet 9 inches tall, carries an armor weighing more than 200 pounds, I Samuel 17:4-7

3 He challenges the armies of Israel, I Samuel 17:8-10;

1 Peter 5:8

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

4 Saul and his men are afraid, I Samuel 17:11, 24;

Luke 12:4-5

⁴ And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

⁵ But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

II David's Trip to the Scene of Battle

1 Jesse sends David to visit his brothers, I Samuel 17:12-22

2 David hears Goliath's challenge, I Samuel 17:23-25

3 David is stirred by the challenge, I Samuel 17:26, 27;

Acts 17:16

¹⁶ Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.

4 Eliab sneeringly reproves David, I Samuel 17:28-31;

2 Chronicles 36:16

¹⁶ But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till *there was* no remedy.

III David's Acceptance of Goliath's Challenge

1 David converses with Saul, I Samuel 17:32-37

2 Saul's armor is exchanged for the simple, proved weapons of a shepherd, I Samuel 17:38-40;

Ephesians 6:13

¹³ 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.

2 Corinthians 10:4

⁴ (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

3 Goliath boasts and David replies, I Samuel 17:41-47;

1 Kings 20:11

¹¹ And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell *him*, Let not him that girdeth on *his harness* boast himself as he that putteth it off.

1 John 4:4

⁴ Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

4 One stone fells a giant, and the armies flee, I Samuel 17:48-58;

Hebrews 11:32-34

³² And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

³³ Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought

¹⁴ And David *was* the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul.

¹⁵ But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

¹⁶ And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

¹⁷ And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched *corn*, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren;

¹⁸ And carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of *their* thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.

¹⁹ Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, *were* in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

²⁰ And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.

²¹ For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army.

²² And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and saluted his brethren.

²³ And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard *them*.

²⁴ And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.

²⁵ And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, *that* the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.

²⁶ And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who *is* this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?

²⁷ And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him.

²⁸ And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

²⁹ And David said, What have I now done? *Is there* not a cause?

³⁰ And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner.

righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

³⁴ Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

NOTES:

Without the Spirit

"The Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul" (I Samuel 16:14). This portion of a verse explains the dismay and fear that Saul feels when he and the armies of Israel are challenged by a giant from Gath. Saul is still able to set his army in battle array, but lacks the courage to go forth into the fight. God had promised that one Israelite should chase a thousand, but now one Philistine defies the entire army of Israel. For forty days the mighty men of Israel quake and, tremble because their leader has lost the Spirit of the Lord from his life.

When the Spirit of the Lord departs from one, he may say, as Samson, "I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself" (Judges 16:20), but soon he will realize that he is bound hand and foot and left helpless in the hands of the enemy. The battle formation is there, the front lines are manned; but they are like guns without shells, tanks without gasoline, batteries without spark. Without life with which to answer the challenge, without courage to hold their ground, they just drop their arms and flee when defied by one lone Philistine.

A Shortage of Spirit-Filled Men

Surely the Spirit of God must have yearned, as He searched the hearts from the front lines to the rear echelon, to find a man whom He could trust with the Spirit to go forth in His name. But in the whole camp of Saul He found not a man. We are told that "the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him" (II Chronicles 16:9).

In these days of evil, with the challenge of the enemy on every hand, the Lord is offering to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, that He might have men and women to combat the forces of hell. What great opportunities God offers! And, yet, how few are responding to the call! "I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none" (Ezekiel 22:30). Will no one respond?

A Shepherd

From the sheepfolds near Bethlehem a youthful shepherd turned his sheep over to the hands of a keeper and prepared to run an errand for his father. Loaded with bread and parched corn for his elder brothers who followed Saul in the army, David started on his way. It was an errand for Jesse, but it became a mission for God, for the Heavenly Father had His eye upon the land. For forty days the armies of Israel were at a standstill until God brought the shepherd who was to lead His people. Upon the mountainside he had meditated upon the glories of God. He thought of God looking after him, as he had looked after the sheep — "The LORD is my shepherd." He had tested God's care as he tried his strength upon the lion and the bear, and he had come through, realizing that he was serving a powerful God.

A Heart Stirred

In camp he expected to hear news of victories and tales of valor; but, instead, he found anxiety and fear. He was filled with

³¹ And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed *them* before Saul: and he sent for him.

³² And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

³³ And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou *art but* a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

³⁴ And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock:

³⁵ And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered *it* out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught *him* by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

³⁶ Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

³⁷ David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

³⁸ And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail.

³⁹ And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved *it*. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved *them*. And David put them off him.

⁴⁰ And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling *was* in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.

⁴¹ And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield *went* before him.

⁴² And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was *but* a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.

⁴³ And the Philistine said unto David, *Am I a dog*, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

⁴⁴ And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

⁴⁵ Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

⁴⁶ This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcases of the host of the Philistines this

indignation when he heard the defiance of the champion of Gath. "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" Who is any vain creature of the dust that he should defy his Creator?

An Answer

The challenge stirred a response in his soul, and his courage mounted as he thought of the Shepherd of Israel who neither slumbers nor sleeps. A lion, a bear, a giant — what did it matter so long as God was David's Keeper? From the sergeant to the captain, up through the chain of command, the words of David were rehearsed until Saul sent for him. "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine," were the words of a stripling as he gazed up into the face of the stalwart king of Israel who stood head and shoulders above him.

David's spirit remained undaunted, though the king told him plainly, "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." He had withstood the sneer of his brother who in essence told him to go home and take care of those few sheep. When a man gets the Spirit of God within him it takes more than a sneer or grin to change him. He has his feet planted upon the Rock that all hell cannot shake.

Unproved Armor

David's zeal did not weaken through the delays in being outfitted — trying on armor and putting it off again. Saul offered his armor — probably the best in the country — but it hampered the spirit of the free shepherd lad. "I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him."

There is a difference between the armament that the world would use to equip a man, and that which God ordains that he should have. Physicians would perform a major operation, when faith and prayer would bring a cure. Some would suggest a coat of mail, when faith with a stone from the brook would do. God does not save a host by a multitude of horses. He is not restricted to man-made methods of war. He sent three hundred men armed with lamps, pitchers, and trumpets against a multitude. When a call comes to preach, the world would load a man down with philosophy, sociology, and psychology, and never point him to the way of prayer, faith, and salvation. Kingdoms have been subdued with the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit, but today men think of battleships and bombers.

David put off Saul's armor, but took with him the armor of God. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (II Corinthians 10:4). Faith in God has been proved. It took the three Hebrew children through the fiery furnace without their being burned; it protected Daniel all night in a den of lions; it brought Paul safely to shore after a night and a day in the deep. Saul's armor may have looked better in the eyes of the world, but David was safer in the armor of God.

The Victory

With a prayer, a sling, a shepherd's crook, and five stones from the brook, David ran to meet Goliath. The Philistine arose to meet David, cursing him by his gods as he came. He was filled with disdain that an unarmored youth should come to fight him with a shepherd's staff. "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?" Here was Goliath with a helmet of brass, a coat of mail, and greaves of brass upon his legs; and before him pranced his armor-bearer, holding high a tremendous shield. David,

day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

⁴⁷ And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle *is* the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.

⁴⁸ And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

⁴⁹ And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang *it*, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.

⁵⁰ So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but *there was* no sword in the hand of David.

⁵¹ Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

⁵² And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron.

⁵³ And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents.

⁵⁴ And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armour in his tent.

⁵⁵ And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, whose son *is* this youth? And Abner said, *As* thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell.

⁵⁶ And the king said, Enquire thou whose son the stripling *is*.

⁵⁷ And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

⁵⁸ And Saul said to him, Whose son *art* thou, *thou* young man? And David answered, I *am* the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.

reaching into his shepherd's bag as he ran, put a stone into his sling — and let go! With sword still sheathed and spear clattering to the ground, Goliath fell flat on his face. The stone had hit its mark. The pride of man lay with face in the dust. With no sword in his hand, nor helmet on his head, but with faith in his God, David had prevailed over the giant of Gath.

A shout went up from the camp of Israel. Those who had lost courage rallied and pursued the Philistines. Fresh zeal fired every Israelitish heart that day, because one lone shepherd boy trusted in his God. The man after God's own heart came to the front in the hour of Israel's need.

A Call

Spiritual Israel today is in dire need of leaders — men with fortitude to stand against the onslaughts of the devil. A Prophet once said, "I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd" (I Kings 22:17). Today there are many sheep but few shepherds. Need the enemy's challenge go unanswered? Is there no one to go forth in the name of the Lord to stir fresh ardor in the souls of the sleeping church? God forbid that Christianity be defeated for want of a man!

QUESTIONS

- 1 How tall was Goliath (in feet)?
- 2 About how much did his armor weigh (in pounds)?
- 3 How many giants are mentioned in the Bible?
- 4 What happened to the Philistine's offer given in verse 9?
- 5 How long was the challenge of Goliath given before David appeared on the scene?
- 6 How did David happen to be with the army?
- 7 What was Eliab's attitude toward David?
- 8 Why did David feel capable to fight the Philistine?
- 9 Why did not David wear Saul's armor?
- 10 What was the effect on the army of Israel when David killed Goliath?
- 11 To what may we liken this effect today?