

David Meets Goliath

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Scene Summary

David meets Goliath presents the exciting story of young David who trusted God to help him do a hard thing. Scenes include: David practicing with his sling as he cares for the sheep...his trip to army camp to visit brothers...his first sight of the giant...King Saul's permission to fight the giant...David discards Saul's ill-fitting armor...his acceptance of Goliath's challenge...David's victory

Scripture

(1 Sam 17:1-53 NIV) Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Socoh in Judah. They pitched camp at Ephes Dammim, between Socoh and Azekah. {2} Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. {3} The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them. {4} A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall. {5} He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels ; {6} on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. {7} His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. His shield bearer went ahead of him. {8} Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. {9} If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us." {10} Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other." {11} On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified. {12} Now David was the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse, who was from Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight sons, and in Saul's time he was old and well advanced in years. {13} Jesse's three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war: The firstborn was Eliab; the second, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah. {14} David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul, {15} but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's sheep at Bethlehem. {16} For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand. {17} Now Jesse said to his son David, "Take this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers

and hurry to their camp. {18} Take along these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance from them. {19} They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines." {20} Early in the morning David left the flock with a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions, shouting the war cry. {21} Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. {22} David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and greeted his brothers. {23} As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it. {24} When the Israelites saw the man, they all ran from him in great fear. {25} Now the Israelites had been saying, "Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his father's family from taxes in Israel." {26} David asked the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" {27} They repeated to him what they had been saying and told him, "This is what will be done for the man who kills him." {28} When Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, "Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle." {29} "Now what have I done?" said David. "Can't I even speak?" {30} He then turned away to someone else and brought up the same matter, and the men answered him as before. {31} What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him. {32} 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 Shaaraim road to Gath and Ekron. {53} When the Israelites returned from chasing the Philistines, they plundered their camp.

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Players

- **Narrator** – The play's "catechist" or teacher should be a good reader with a clear voice.
- **Jesse** – David's father, should be played as an older person.
- **Eliab** – David's older brother, somewhat sarcastic to his younger brother.
- **David** – Bold and brave, trusting in God, wanting to help.
- **Goliath** – This player should be awesome in size and voice.
- **Soldiers** – As needed, more soldiers can be added to the scene.
- **Saul** – The king is in authority, but is noticeably afraid of this giant.

Special Props

- Normal items from the prop box such as cloaks, veils, robes and headdresses.
- A staff and a sling for David.
- Spear or sword for Goliath.

Script – David Meets Goliath

Narrator: Near Bethlehem, the youngest of the brothers kept his father's sheep. Sometimes, while he was in the field, David practiced using a sling so that he could hurl a stone exactly where he wanted it.

Jesse: David, we have not heard from your three brothers since they went to war. Go and see how they are doing. Take bread, cheese and corn. Their food may be running low.

Narrator: Early the next morning, David starting walking. He carried food for his brothers and ten cheeses for their captain. [pause] After several hours he saw the army camp. He knew that the Philistines were across the valley. David hurried past tents and soldiers to find his brothers.

David: [excited, shouted] Eliab!

Narrator: Suddenly, a loud voice boomed across the valley.

Goliath: [shouting] Chose a man that will fight me.

Narrator: David looked into the valley and saw the largest man he had ever seen. He had a sword and spear. He was dressed in bright metal armor.

Goliath: [roaring] If your man kills me, then you will rule over all the Philistines. But if I kill you man, then we will rule your country.

Narrator: Everyone in Israel's army was frightened. They were all afraid to fight the giant.

David: Who does he think he is that he dares to fight against God's army?

Soldier: King Saul will give great riches to the man that kills the giant. But who would dare to try?

David: I will fight him!

Eliab: [scolding at David] Who do you think you are and who did you leave those few sheep with? Go home, you are nothing but a small boy. Take care of you few sheep.

[scene change to king Saul]

Saul: I have heard what this boy has said. Bring him to me at once.

[David comes in]

Saul: You cannot fight this giant. You have had no training.

David: God helped me kill a bear and a lion that came after my sheep. God will help me kill this giant.

Saul: [pause, thinking] All right, but put on my armor and take my sword.

Narrator: The men dressed David in Saul's armor. The armor was very heavy. David could hardly walk.

David: I can't wear this. I am not used to it. I cannot fight with a sword.

Narrator: David took off the armor. He walked to the brook in the valley. Carefully, he chose five smooth stones. He put four into his shepherd's bag and one in his sling. Then he ran to meet the giant.

Goliath: [shouting] Will you fight me with a stick as though I was a dog?

David: You come to me with a sword, but I come to you in the name of the Lord.

Narrator: David twirled his sling around his head. Faster and faster it went. Then as the angry giant rushed at David, he let the stone fly out of the sling. Straight to the giant's forehead it went. The giant fell to the ground with a loud clanking of his armor. [pause] When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they jumped up and ran. The Israelite soldiers also jumped up and cheered. They ran to catch the Philistines. [pause] The war was over and God helped David to win.

The End

Supplemental Information

The Philistines had been enemies of the Israelites for years. There had been many wars between the two countries. The Philistines had a trained army for some time. The Israelites had just formed their army. Before Saul became king, whoever was the leader gathered people together to form an army whenever they needed one. King Saul privately selected several men to serve as permanent soldiers. He would call for more men when a larger army was needed.

The three oldest sons of a prominent shepherd in Bethlehem named Jesse were probably called into service when King Saul made war again with the Philistines. The two armies were camped at Socoh on two hillsides, just a mile apart. In between the hills was a wide valley with a small brook at the bottom. The two armies fortified their positions on each hillside.

The champion of the Philistine army was Goliath from the city of Gath. Goliath was over nine feet high. The exact height of the giant is not known because scholars differ on the length of the unit of measurement called the cubit. This was a very large human. Accounts of giants are elsewhere in the Bible. Skeletons of giants have been discovered recently in this area of Palestine.

Goliath was a trained soldier. His armor gleamed in the sun, from his bronze helmet to his bronze leg pieces. He also wore a thick leather coat covered with bronze rectangles to protect him in battle. His full armor may have weighed well over a hundred pounds. His iron spearhead weighed nearly twenty pounds. When the Israelite army saw this giant, glistening against the morning sun, then heard his booming voice, they were very frightened and ran.

David was the youngest of eight sons and probably in his late teens at this time. He had been out of doors most of his youth, so his skin would be dark from the sun. He would have been very healthy and strong. David was brave too. He practiced many hours using his homemade sling. He could sling a stone swift and hard, directly at the spot he wanted it to land. With it, he could kill wild animals that could injure his sheep. He had killed a wild lion and a bear and had rescued a sheep from its mouth.

David loved God. When he was out on the hills with his sheep, David often thought about God and the wonderful world that He had made. Sometimes he made up songs about God and sang them to his sheep. David prayed too.

When David saw the giant and heard his awful threats, he became angry. He felt that the giant had insulted God Himself. He wanted to fight the giant to defend God's honor. David was not a trained soldier. David tried on Saul's armor, but it did not fit and it was too heavy and he felt awkward in it. David knew that he could never fight using Saul's armor, so he took it off. David decided to use his homemade sling and he knew that God would help him. When David went out to meet the giant, Goliath did not see him at first. When Goliath did see David, the giant became very angry and felt insulted. David had no armor. Hanging from David's belt was his shepherd's club that he used to drive away wild wolves from the sheep.

When their champion, Goliath fell, the Philistine soldier ran, but the Israelite army pursued them and won the battle.

Extra Time

David and other shepherds learned how to use simple slings to help guide and protect their sheep. With a sling, they could drive off wild animals – wolves, bears, and lions.

Using a sling looks easy, but a young shepherd practice for months before he could land a stone in exactly the spot he chose. He placed a small, smooth stone in the leather piece, held the two cords together in one hand, then quickly twirled the sling around above his head. At just the right moment, he let go one cord. The stone flew with great force. If a shepherd was really good at slinging, he could hit his mark 600 paces away.

The shepherd used his sling only for good purposes. If a sheep got too far behind the flock, the shepherd slung a stone and landed it just behind the sheep. This reminded the animal to catch up.

When a sheep wandered too far away, the shepherd landed a stone just in front of his nose. This warned the sheep to come back. Always the shepherd was careful not to hit the sheep.