

## David the Giant Slayer

The story of David the shepherd boy and Goliath the giant is from the Bible's Old Testament in the ancient text of 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel, the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter. The consensus among King Saul's soldiers was that the time for the battle to be forfeited had arrived. Even though they were sent there to represent and fight for the citizens of their kingdom they felt they had done all they could do. They were sent to win the battle for their people. Instead, they seemed content to simply size up the cost of winning the battle and to deem it unwinnable due to the cost. After all, the giant looming in the valley dared anyone to challenge his pre-claimed victory. Neither the Giant, nor the Philistine soldiers, were expecting anything less than a quiet surrender and submission to their will; and all under their terms and conditions. With victory assured, the Philistine soldiers standing behind the giant felt comfortable hurling insults, accusations, and lies—which continued at least while the giant remained between them and King Saul's soldiers. The crowd observing on the hillsides, though claiming to be unbiased, were gazing at the battle lines drooling over their chance to witness the giant slay anyone that challenged him, so they could report to their friends and family—describing the slaughter they had witnessed.

The natural fear any soldier feels toward impending battle, of both the known and unknown, and the pitched fervor of the din from the crowd that had gathered, stoked the confidence of the Philistine soldiers behind the giant. The adrenaline flowed to lend confidence to themselves and fostered believability by others that they were invincible. All things considered, the odds of the Philistine's success, or at the very least their perception of success, was obvious to everyone involved. Everyone was convinced the Giant had already won, ignoring any evidence that might produce a different result besides the obvious. It is more than plausible that Goliath entered the contest knowing he had already won just by showing up. There was no fear in the Giant's heart.

In the months leading up to the battle, while King Saul's soldiers most likely worked hard, made battle plans, practiced the plans, and made sacrifices to be battle ready, the Giant simply spent his time lumbering about his business until the time came for him to slouch his oversized carcass into the valley for battle. After all, the Giant believed he did not need to prepare, practice, or train because of the sheer magnitude of his size, and the backing of the Philistine army there with him. Everyone thought Goliath could overcome all contenders before the fight ever commenced. The Giant was the weight on the scales favoring the Philistine army in battle and no one expected he would ever have a real challenger. Everyone looking on were quick to agree on how strong the Giant and how weak any challenger must be before the battle ever began.

Believing and claiming the Giant was truly unstoppable, was the first skirmish King Saul's soldiers conceded. They reasoned they would inevitably lose, so, they should concede for the good of everyone involved, especially themselves. Having weakened the King Saul's army's resolve, for all practical matters the contest was over as the Giant stood taunting them from the valley below. The crowd of onlookers concurred and saw the Giant as the victor over the King Saul's army and that the Philistines would be taking over Saul's kingdom without a fight.

All was settled, or so it seemed—until David showed up. David was not part of King Saul's army brigades, but nonetheless he aptly defeated the Giant. David's victory over the Giant was not the typical battle engagement. In fact, David's method defied all rules of engagement, as did his inordinate approach to armor and weaponry. It is an understatement to say that David's victory stunned the opposing army and

all who had gathered that day for battle. David killed the Giant with a smooth stone and a shepherd's slingshot. The difference David brought to the battle was neither swagger nor confidence, although he possessed each in more than adequate quantity. David's difference was firmly rooted in his trust of the One who sent him into battle. David took care to be obedient in his activities and true to his assigned mission. Even though David's plans and motives are questioned until this day by some, the magnitude of what he accomplished that day is indisputable. The soldiers on both sides that ridiculed him before the battle, feared David and his weapon afterwards. However, David knew the secret to his success was not in his weapons or strategy, but rather the TRUTH he brought with him in to battle—God will defeat his enemy. "But David said to the Philistine, 'You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a saber, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of armies, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will hand you over to me'" (1 Samuel 17:45-46a NASB). Having confidence that what God spoke was true, and being obedient to God's directives, David was able to kill the Giant with little effort.

Do you believe that God's Word is truthful?

Do you strive to follow His direction in your life?

Is there a giant undertaking God has led you to in life?

Gather your courage, your faith, and what you know and believe about God—and go slay the Giants in your life!

*Dr. H. Kenneth Smith*  
SENIOR PASTOR