

Sunday Night Message

September 15, 2019

David and Goliath

Topics – Saul; David; Jesse; Goliath

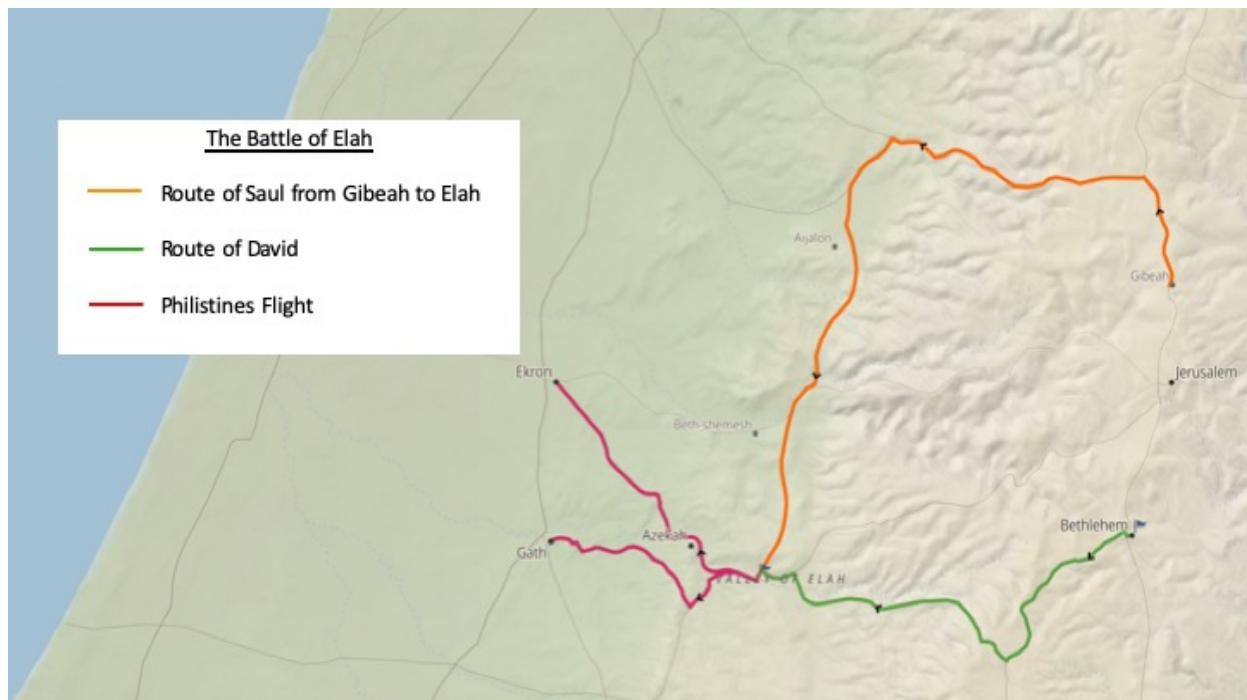
Series – *1 Samuel*

Text – 1 Samuel 17

Introduction

When we last left David in chapter sixteen, he was anointed by Samuel as the next king of Israel, but then because it was going to take several years to prepare both Israel and David for their new king. For a while, David would go to work for the old king. At the end of the chapter, he was recruited by Saul as his harper. Saul needs his own personal harper because he is mentally unstable and is tormented by evil spirits, which cause him to “lose it” and go into fits of rage. When David plays the harp, it calms Saul. Saul has evil spirits troubling him, while David has the Holy Spirit.

Practical Point – While the world around us is going nuts, we can have peace; and, we can also help bring a little peace to them.



I. The Fighters (vs. 1 – 15)

A. The Philistine Giant (vs. 1 – 11)

1. Verse 4 – six cubits and a span = 9 ½ feet (cubit = 18 inches – the average length from the fingertip to the elbow; span = 9 inches)
2. Verse 5 – “mail” = armor; 5000 shekels = 125 pounds.

3. Verse 6 – “greaves” = covering of armor for the legs; shin guards. “Target of brass” – can either mean a spear or javelin, or a shield. According to one commentary: “a circular frame, carried at the back, suspended by a long belt which crossed the breast from the shoulders to the loins.”¹ It was likely some type of protection for the neck and back.
4. Verse 7 – “weaver’s beam” – “round wooden roller on which the cloth or carpet was wound during the weaving process in Bible times. The spears of the giant Goliath (1 Sm 17:7; 2 Sm 21:19; 1 Chr 20:5) and an Egyptian killed by Benaiah, one of David’s mighty men (1 Chr 11:23) were compared to a weaver’s beam.”² His spear’s head weighed 600 shekels of iron, which is equivalent to 15 pounds.

The Philistines and Goliath are challenging Israel to bring out one man to fight with Goliath rather than have the entire army fight. The winner of the battle will determine the winner of the war. The Israelites, including their fearless leader, Saul, were terrified. They did not think that their God was bigger than Goliath. Apparently, even Jonathan who had showed tremendous courage in past battles was afraid to tackle Goliath.

B. The Faithful Shepherd (vs. 12 – 15)

1. David was either too young, or possibly too important to the family of Jesse to be spared to go to battle. Jesse had eight sons, and we know that three of the eldest boys were fighting with Saul. The five youngest sons were apparently allowed to remain at home to take care of the farm.
2. Notice the phrase in verse 12 – “and the man went among men for an old man in the days of Saul.” The wording of this is strange, but it basically means that Jesse was an old man during the days of Saul.
3. Notice verse 15 – David was working for Saul as his harp player (1 Samuel 16:19), but when the war broke out, David was allowed to return home while the elder brothers were away at the battle. David was a faithful servant to his father before he was called by Saul to be his harper. He was then faithful to Saul. When he was called back home, he was again the faithful shepherd for his father’s flock. He will soon be a faithful soldier.

Practical Point – Be faithful to do what is needed.

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." (Luke 16:10)

Don’t get ahead of God. Just be faithful. God knows where you are, and He is well able to find you when He needs to use you for a greater task. David probably wanted to go to war initially with his brothers, but Jesse needed him home. God arranged for David to be there at just the time that he was needed.

¹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, vol. 1 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 186.

² Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *“Beam.”* Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 270.

II. The Frontline of the Battle (vs. 16 – 32)

A. The Philistine giant is tormenting the Israelites for forty days. (v. 16)

Note – “forty” in the Bible is the number for testing. It was the:

- Number of Days for the Duration of the Flood
- Number of Days Moses was Up on Mt. Sinai
- Number of Days the Spies were sent into the Promised Land
- Number of Years of the Wilderness Wanderings
- Number of Days for the Temptation of Christ

B. Jesse sends David out to give a blessing and get a report as to how the battle is going. (vs. 17 – 23)

C. David hears the taunts of the Philistine giant, and offers to fight him. He was the only one willing to fight Goliath. (vs. 24 – 32)

Practical Point – Notice verse 29 – when his older brother rebukes him for what he perceives to be cockiness, David tells him that there are some things that are worth dying for. This Philistine was cursing the God of Israel, and David could not let that go. It was a cause worth fighting for.

There are causes that are worth fighting and dying for today.

- The Cause of Christ is worth fighting for.
- The salvation of sinners of lost sinners is worth fighting for.
- Freedom is worth fighting for.
- Your family is worth fighting for.

Some things are just too important to let go without a fight.

III. David’s Former Experience (vs. 33 – 37)

David had saw God work before when the bear and the lion each came by to steal one of the sheep. God enabled David to kill them, and he was sure that this giant Philistine would be no different. God would enable David to bring him down as well.

We again remind you of the verse:

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." (Luke 16:10)

If we are faithful to do the smaller things, God will be faithful to do the bigger things. If we can take small steps of faith, we will grow take the larger steps of faith.

IV. The Fight (vs. 38 – 58)

Notice vs. 38 – 39, David could not fight with Saul's armor. He hadn't proved them, meaning he hadn't tested them or practiced with them. He wasn't proficient using Saul's tools. David needed to fight Goliath with the tools that he was familiar with, the area that he was currently gifted in. He knew how to use a sling. Use the gifts that God has given you to do the things that God has called you to do.

Practical Point – You need to be you. You need to find God's unique purpose for your life. You can't live for someone else's purpose. You can't do things the same way somebody else does them.

Notice verse 40, David gets five stones. Some say that it is because Goliath had four sons:

"These four were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants." (2 Samuel 21:22)

The Giant was filled with pride and self-confidence. David was filled with faith in His God. David understood that the center of this battle was not man vs. man, but rather God vs. the gods of the Philistines. He was perhaps the only one that fully understood this.

David drops the giant with a rock, then takes the giants own sword and takes off his head.

All of this is done while Saul watches. He is once again inactive in the battle. Whereas, it was Jonathan before who brought a great victory against the enemy, now it was David. Saul, however, did not have any wins under his belt, no notches on his sword.

He inquires now about David's father. He knew who David was, but now that he had promised tax-free status to the family of the victor, plus his own daughter, he would have to become more intimately acquainted with David's family.

It was a great victory for God, for Israel, and for David; but, not so much for Saul.