

A Great Faith in an Even Greater God (Part 1)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 13 March 2016

Preacher: Don Coleman

[0 : 00] Chapter 17, 1 Samuel, David and Goliath.

It is a story about which I am absolutely confident that every single person here tonight is familiar, knows a lot about. It's a rather lengthy chapter, 58 verses. It's a long chapter, a long story, and yet the part that we know, the part we're familiar with, really takes a very small part of the chapter, even though really it's not just one little story among other stories, it's one long story, 58 verses. And so we're going to look at that tonight and next Sunday night as we consider this very familiar story, the story of David and Goliath. And I'm going to kind of teach it under this heading or our subject tonight and next Sunday will be a great faith in an even greater God. I think that's a good title for the lesson that is taught here because it's really not about Goliath, not about a giant. Really, though it is about David and his great faith, it really is more about the greatness of God. The greatness of God. So great faith in an even greater God. All right, I do want to read the entire chapter, 58 verses.

So you're ready for that? Of course, I'm reading from the New King James, so yours might be just slightly different if you're following along in your Bibles, but I would encourage you to do that.

Chapter 17, verse 1. Now the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle and were gathered at Soco, which belongs to Judah. So they're in the territory of the tribe of Judah. They encamped between Soco and Ezekiah in Ephes-damim. You've been there, haven't you? It's probably not one of the stops on a holy land tour. And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together and they encamped in the valley of Elah and drew up in battle array against the Philistines. The Philistines stood on the mountain on one side. The Israelites or Israel stood on the mountain, a mountain on the other side with a valley between them. And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines named Goliath. From Gath, Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. He had a bronze helmet on his head and he was armed with a coat of mail and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. And he had bronze armor on his legs and a bronze javelin between his shoulders. Now the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam and his iron spearhead weighed six hundred shekels and a shield bearer went before him. Then he stood and cried out to the armies of Israel and said to them, why have you come out to line up for battle? I mean, what are you doing here? Am I not a Philistine and you the servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. If I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us. And the Philistines said, I defy the armies of Israel this day. Give me a man that we may fight together. When Saul and all the all Israel heard these words of the Philistines, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem, Judah, whose name was Jesse and who had eight sons. And the man was old, advanced in years in the days of Saul. The three oldest sons of Jesse had gone to follow Saul to the battle. The names of the three of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab, the firstborn next to him, Abinadab and the third Shammah. David was the youngest and the three oldest followed Saul.

[4 : 40] But David occasionally went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep in Bethlehem. Remember, he had been, he'd come into the kind of the palace to play his harp and soothe Saul. And the Philistines drew near and presented themselves 40 days, morning and evening. So this guy just keeps coming 40 days, keeps coming out and giving this challenge. Then Jesse said to his son, David, take now for your brothers an ephah of this dried grain and these 10 loaves and run to your brothers at the camp and carry these 10 cheeses to the captain of their thousand and see how your brothers fare and bring back news of them. Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the valley of Elah fighting with the Philistines. Really, there was no fighting yet. So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with the keeper and took the things and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the camp as the army was going out to the fight

and shouting for the battle for Israel and the Philistines had drawn up in battle array, army against army. And David left his supplies in the hand of the supply keeper, ran to the army and came and greeted his brothers. Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines. And he spoke according to the same words. So David heard them and all the men of Israel, when they saw the men fled from him and were dreadfully afraid. So the men of Israel said, have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel. And it shall be that the man who kills him, the king will enrich with great riches, will give him his daughter in marriage and give his father's house exemption from taxes in Israel. And David spoke to the men who stood by him saying, what shall be done for the man who kills the full, this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel for who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God? And the people answered him in this manner saying, so shall it be done for the man who kills him. Now Eliab, his older brother, oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men and Eliab's anger was aroused against David. And he said, why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness?

I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle. And David said, what have I done now? I've heard some of our boys say that to their brothers. What have I done now? Is there not a cause? Then he turned from him toward another and said the same thing. And these people answered him as the first ones did. Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported them to Saul and he sent for him. Then David said to Saul, let no man's heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, you're not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are a youth and he a man of war from his youth. David said to Saul, your servant used to keep the father's sheep. And when the lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after it and struck it and delivered the lamb from the from its mouth. And when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard and struck it and killed it. Your servant has killed both lion and bear. And this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God. Moreover, David said, the Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, he will deliver me from the hand of the Philistine. And Saul said to David, go and the Lord be with you. So Saul clothed David with his armor and he put a bronze helmet on his head. He also clothed him with a coat of mail. David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk for he had not tested them. And David said to Saul, I cannot walk with these for I have not tested them. So David took them off. Then he took his staff in his hand and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook and put them in a shepherd's bag in a pouch, which he had in his sling was in his hand and he drew near to the Philistine. So the Philistine came and began drawing near to David and the man who bore the shield went before him. And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him for he was only a youth, ruddy and good looking. So the Philistine said to David, am I a dog that you come to me with sticks? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, come to me and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field. Then David said to the Philistine, you come to me with a sword, with a spear and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day, the Lord will deliver you into my hand and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day, I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beast of the earth that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hands. So it was when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David that David hurried and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead so that the stone sank into his forehead and he fell on his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone and struck the Philistine and killed him. But there was no sword in the hand of David.

[11:10] Therefore, David ran and stood over the Philistine. And this is the part that we don't usually tell our kids when we're reciting the story. Stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of his its sheaf and killed him and cut off his head with it. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance to the valley and to the gates of Ekron. And the

wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Sharaim, even as far as Gath and Ekron. Then the children of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines and they plundered their tents. And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem. But he put his armor in his tent. When Saul saw David going out against the Philistines, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, Abner, whose son is this youth? And Abner said, as your soul lives, O king, I do not know. So the king said, inquire whose son this young man is. Then 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. And Saul said to him, whose son are you, young man? So David answered, I am the son of your servant, Jesse, the Bethlehemite. All right, so 58 verses long.

But what a story, right? I mean, we've heard it how many times? I cannot even begin to count them. And I also cannot even count the number of times I've read the story to our sons when they were little. Different versions of it, sometimes straight out of the Bible, sometimes out of little Bible storybooks. And, you know, and there's even one, a version of VeggieTale on this story. One that I don't really care for that much, but we'll not get into that. I don't think Goliath was a big bumpy pickle, you know. Anyway, so what a story. Now, before we really get into the story, I think I'd like to just say a couple of things. Maybe a few points that I believe are interesting. One of them maybe clears up something that you've noticed here as you've thought about what we've read here tonight and what we studied last week. One little minor little point that I'd like to clear up. And it's this. There seems to be a contradiction between chapter 16 and chapter 17 concerning Saul's knowledge of David. Did you happen to pick up on that? I kind of mentioned it last week and really didn't clarify it, but there seems to be a difference, a discrepancy here. In chapter 16 and verse 21, remember David had been brought before Saul because of Saul's tortured spirit. And David's harp playing soothed the savage breast. And, you know, it comes from an old, old, old play that was written back in the 17th century, somewhere in that area, 18th century. So the full line is, music hath charms to soothe the savage breast. So this is what David did. He would play his harp and it would soothe Saul because God had sent an evil spirit, the Bible says, to torment Saul. All right? But, and so in verse 21, it says, so David came to Saul and stood before him and he loved him greatly and he became his armor bearer.

Then Saul sent to Jesse saying, please let David stand before me for he has found favor in my sight. All right? So we might remember that. But when we get to chapter 17, verse 55 says, when Saul saw David going out against the Philistines, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, Abner, whose son is this youth? And Abner said, as your soul lives, O king, I do not know, remember? And the king said, well, find out.

And so eventually they bring David before the king and Saul says to him, whose son are you, young man? And it sounds like he doesn't even know him. Right? And so maybe appears to be a contradiction between the two. And the answer to that is really quite simple.

Saul, notice Saul does not ask who David is. He just asks about his father, who David's father is. That's what he asked.

[16:08] And that's important. Now, why would he ask that? Well, if you remember also in verse 25, it contains the king's promise to the one who would kill the giant, defeat the giant.

The man who kills him, the king will enrich with great riches, will give him his daughter, that would be in marriage, of course, and give his father's house exemption from taxes in Israel.

All right? Now, since Jesse was an old, old man during the time of Saul, that's what the Bible says in chapter 17, verse 12. He was an old man. And so when Saul, back in chapter 16, sent for David, Jesse apparently was too old to travel. He didn't go with him. He puts him on a donkey, loads it down with some things to give to the king, presents to the king, and he sends David on his way. So Jesse does not go. So Saul perhaps has never met Jesse. I know this is just a minor little point, but I want to make sure to clear up any seeming contradiction in scripture. And so Saul certainly would not have remembered the name of David's father. Why would he, of all his subjects in the kingdom? So it's not that he didn't know who David was. He just needed to know some information about his father, because now his father and family are not going to have to pay taxes any longer. So I've cleared that up. I know you were really worried about that. But also, a second thing, and this is really maybe more pertinent, more important. Chapter 17. I mean, not only is it a tremendous story, engaging story, probably, you know, so well written, not probably, it's certainly so well written, so vivid, so picturesque, and we can just really immerse ourselves into the story. And so not only is it familiar, but it is familiar because it's so well written. But chapter 17 beautifully complements

chapter 16 by revealing to us the character of David. This is really the first time we understand really who David is. I mean, we know his family. We know what he'd been doing for a living. We know some other information about him. Chapter 16 really only tells us about David's outward observable appearance. You know, he's ruddy, probably red-headed, bright eyes, and good-looking. Now that's all chapter 16 really tells us. But chapter 17 reveals that David was exactly what God was looking for in a king. And how do we know what God was looking for in a king? Because God told us. He told us way back in chapter 13, verse 14, where the Bible says the Lord has sought for himself a man after his own heart. So we know the kind of man God wants to be king over Israel, and David certainly proved himself to be exactly that man. And we discover that in chapter 17. So chapter 17 is not only a great story, but it really complements, perfect complement, to the introduction of the man David, or the young man David, in chapter 16. All right, so let's look at this familiar story. And again, we'll just kind of get into it tonight. There's just so much here, and so much to learn here. And so let me begin with the way the chapter begins, and that is Goliath is described. That's the first thing. We have Goliath being described here in some very interesting details. And so the first few verses of the chapter give us that information that we need about this champion who's come out to defy the armies of the living God.

And that's Goliath. And so it says in verse 1 that the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle, and they gathered there at a place called Soko. That's how you would pronounce that in the Hebrew, Soko, which, by the way, on the map was located about eight miles east of Gath. That's Goliath's hometown. So just eight miles from his hometown. This is where the Philistines have gathered for battle against the Israelites there in Israelite territory in Soko. But it's also 15 miles west of Bethlehem, David's hometown. Just kind of an interesting fact. And they encamped at Ephus-Demim, a couple of miles west of Soko. And verse 2 has Saul and his armies encamped in the valley of Elah.

Which is the word for tree. So it's the valley of the tree. So I don't know if there was just one tree in that valley, or more likely it was a historical tree. Something of significance. So it was named the valley of the tree. You know that tree. And everybody there would have known that tree. Now maybe the tree still existed. Maybe it didn't. Maybe it was long gone. Trees have a habit of not always being around.

[21 : 45] And so maybe there was no tree left. But it's still called the valley of the tree. Kind of reminds me when we lived in Arkansas. We lived pretty near a place in Arkansas called Marked Tree. I don't know if you've ever been through there. Marked Tree. And for the first few years that we lived in in that area, I wondered about, well, where did they get the name? And finally someone told me there's a river that goes right by, right beside Marked Tree. And years ago there was a tree there where the Indians would stop and kind of a little port there, so to speak. And this big tree, apparently, was a landmark so that when they're coming down the river they would see the tree. And it would be, have a mark on it.

Marked Tree. Now I was really disappointed to find out the tree's not even there anymore. No tree there anymore. You can't go and see the marked tree. It's not there anymore. And so maybe that's the case here. So they're in the valley of Elah, a very famous place. Maybe according to Israel some famous thing happened there. And so here's Saul and his armies and they have gathered together.

So verse 3 says, and the Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain mountain. Probably the word means more some raised elevation, not necessarily a mountain mountain.

And so there they are on each side, and in between is a valley. Literally a wadi, a wadi, a dried up creek bed in between these two raised places. All right? All right, so both sides are in position for the battle.

Ready to, you know, to go after it. But then out steps this walking, talking mountain of a man who comes walking out to challenge. And verse 4 describes him as follows. And so here's the description Goliath described. Goliath is, first of all, we understand, a Philistine. All right?

[23 : 55] That's not all that noteworthy. He's a Philistine. We know that. I mean, he's the commander, a commander or a champion. Could be that he was the commander of that detachment of soldiers from the Philistines.

Some have thought, but we don't really know. But he was certainly a champion. And all we'd have to do is take one look at him. We know that he was a champion. And so he's a Philistine. He is from

Gath, a principal city in Philistia at the time. And a place, apparently, where a whole family of giants live. We'll come, you know, have Gath mentioned again as we go along. All right, so the Philistines, you know, were one of the Canaanite tribes of that land. A Canaanite tribe that Israel had not defeated. Remember when they came into the land, God had commanded them to defeat and destroy all of the Canaanites because of their wickedness. It was part of God's judgment, as well as being a place that would be promised to them, a land promised to them, flowing with milk and honey. But they would destroy all of the Canaanites there. But they didn't, did they? They came up short and they did not destroy the Philistines. And so they still existed, Philistia, to the west, extreme west kind of strip there along the Mediterranean and further south of the promised land. All right, so the

Philistines were a powerful people, very powerful. They were a warlike people. Every time we have them mentioned in the Bible, it's always about war, always about battles. And they were a warlike people.

And they were known for their expert skill in metallurgy. We kind of ran across that some Sundays ago here in 1 Samuel. Remember where they kept all the blacksmiths from making anything of metal for the Israelites? They had a corner on the market and they were experts in metallurgy. So they crafted armor and weapons of war and they were masters at that. And when we get to the description of Goliath coming out for battle, then we know they really knew what they were doing in outfitting their soldiers for battle. And so they were also idolaters, of course. And they worshipped the fish god, Dagon. You remember the story about Dagon and the Ark of the Covenant? Anyway, we don't need to go back over that. All right, so by nationality then, he's a Philistine and therefore, by implication, because he's a Philistine, he's a pagan. A pagan idolater, an idol worshiper. All right, next we understand, as the Bible is describing Goliath for us, that he was a really big man. I mean, he really was. It's not just conjecture on our part by theologians who have a fanciful eye and want to come up with something bigger than life.

He's described as a really big man. He's described as a giant. He was a giant. There were giants in the land. Remember, you can go all the way back to when the spies were sent in. And one of those spies, one of those faithful spies was Caleb. And after they're about to enter into the land, Caleb asked, Caleb asked for a particular region of the promised land that was inhabited by the giants.

[27 : 28] And so there were giants in the land, and Goliath was a real live giant. Verse 4 says that his height was six cubits and a span. Six cubits and a span. Now, according to this ancient measurement, and we pretty well figured this out pretty detailed, he was nine feet, nine inches tall.

I don't think we have anybody that tall living today. I think there have been some that have gotten close. I'm not sure. Check out Guinea's World Book of Records if you want to. But that's tall, huge, nine foot, nine inches tall. And to complete this juggernaut of a soldier, and he really was, he is armored from head to foot. And armed for battle. You know, he appeared really overwhelmingly formidable in size and in his armor. This guy was a walking tank. When you look at the description and all the armor that he had on, it begins with a bronze helmet on his head. A little bit later, we see that Saul wanted to outfit, suit up David with a bronze helmet. So they had those kind of helmets, and usually they were worn by commanders. It was not something that you would normally have all soldiers wearing. And yet the Philistines, again, they were advanced in their weaponry and in their metallurgy. And so they probably had bronze helmets. And so he wore a bronze helmet. You can imagine how big it was. And he was armed with a coat of mail. That's the next thing that the Bible tells us here in verse 5. A coat of mail. We know what mail is. You know, the little ringlets woven together. And it's a piece of armor, kind of a mail coat. And it weighed, according to the scripture here, it weighed 5,000 shekels of bronze. And again, we can know, we know exactly what that would be. That would be 126 pounds. Now that's quite a mail coat. 126 pounds. He had bronze armor on his legs, according to the description here. These would be bronze greaves. They would be called greaves, or knee and shin guards, and made out of bronze. It would protect his legs. So he had the bronze helmet, which probably came over most of his face. He had this bronze mail, mail coat, ringlets, weighing 126 pounds. That would probably go down below his groin area, near the knees, and then had those greaves on both of his feet. And the Bible didn't say anything about his shoes, but I imagine he had iron shoes as well, we could assume. All right, so, and then his weaponry. All right, so he's got all this armor on him, and he has weapons. First, it says a bronze javelin. Bronze javelin between his shoulders. Some actually would translate this a bronze scimitar. I know what a scimitar is, you know, a curved sword. And they would be worn kind of in a special

sheath on the back between the shoulders.

I mean, you couldn't put a flat sword back there because you couldn't get it up. But a scimitar would just come right out, and so he could just reach out there and pull out that scimitar and do battle. And he had a spear. And it says his spear, or it says this about the spear, its staff, the staff of the spear, was like a weaver's beam. Now, that's not really a description of what it looked like or how big it was or how much it weighed. It's a description of how it was constructed. Like a weaver's beam, it would have a ring or a loop on the end of it to which a rope, a cord would be attached so that when you threw, when he threw the spear, he could retrieve it back. You see, you have to understand that with all this armor, Goliath, I don't imagine we would assume he was very agile with all that on. He's a big mountain of a guy. And so getting out there and just really moving around a lot as a soldier might do is not something he could do. And so he really was just kind of, again, a shielded tank going out into battle and throwing his spear. And then he'd pull it back and throw it again. And remember, we'll speak of him in a minute. He had his armor bearer that would be in front of him, protect him, and so forth. So this is the spear. And the head of the spear was made of iron, and it weighed 600 shekels, which would be 15.1 pounds. Now, you know, that's a lot. Think about how big the staff would be on that, and how long it would have to be, and how heavy that would be. And then to complete the whole thing, he had this shield bearer that went before him. [33:18] And this, of course, would be a servant of his, or maybe another soldier that would be serving under him. And he would carry, they had two kinds of shields in those days. One would be a round, a more personal shield, and the other would be a rectangle shield that would shield the entire body, or most of the body, up to usually about right there. So he had a shield bearer that carried that out in front of him. And we can assume that the shield was not for the servant, but for Goliath.

So how big would the shield need to be if you're nine foot nine inches tall? So we're talking about a huge shield that the armor bearer would carry out in front of him. And so what a formidable enemy this man would have been, and was. Then we understand, and we're told, something about Goliath's kind of spiritual life. He was a blasphemer. He was a blasphemer. Look again at the description there in verse 8, starting with verse 8. And he stood, and he cried out to the armies of Israel, and he said to them, why have you, that is all of you, you know, this whole army, why have you lined up here for battle and to fight in battle? And he said, am I not a Philistine? I mean, you're here to fight the Philistines.

I'm one. I'm a Philistine. I'm right here. So what does he say? You, the servants of Saul, choose a man among yourselves. Choose somebody. Just one man. I'm one man. I'm a Philistine. Choose you an Israelite, is what he's saying. Choose a man, and let him come down to me. If he's able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. And if the other is true, then you'll be our servants. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day. Give me a man that we may fight together. Now, that's tough talk, isn't it? And I guess at first glance, it seems like a reasonable idea. You know, others have had that idea over the years. Instead of all the bloodshed, let's just choose one on each side, and let's go after it, and whoever wins, wins the battle. It seems like a reasonable idea. Only they didn't have anybody over there nine foot nine inches tall with all that armor, so he was pretty sure of the outcome there. But the point here is that he defied, defied the armies of Israel, and by doing that, he's defying God, Yahweh God. Later, David would say, in fact, more than once, he said of Goliath in verse 26, who is this uncircumcised Philistine? That means, who is this guy who's separated from God, this unbeliever, that he should defy the armies of the living God? He's just making note of Goliath's blasphemy against Yahweh God. And yet, apparently, his defiant words had their desired effect, because in verse 11, it says, when Saul and all of Israel heard these words of the

Philistine, what happened? They were dismayed. That's how it's translated. It's a word that means to be shattered. They were shattered. They fell apart and greatly feared. Not just feared, greatly feared. They were terrified. Now, Saul and Israel, I think we should realize that Saul and Israel should not have been afraid of Goliath, especially after he came out and said what he said. They should not be afraid. And they would not have been afraid, perhaps, if they had remembered the covenant God made with them through Abraham. And in Genesis chapter 12, verse 3, God promised through Abraham, and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you, I will curse. So really, little did Goliath realize, but with his defiant, cursing words against Israel, he had sealed his doom. And if Israel had thought about it, they would have known that to be the case.

Why should they be afraid? So this is Goliath described. Second tonight, and this will be my last point tonight, Goliath is defined. He's defined.

And here I'm talking about the various ways people defined Goliath in that day. And if we were to make the application, carry the application over into our lives, how we define our giants. How Goliath was defined as according to the different perspectives of him. And I'm not going to reread all of this, but Goliath threatens Israel, defies Israel, and by extension defies the living God. He mocks them, mocks him, and repeatedly he does this for days, 40 days, every day he comes out there and makes this same challenge. And each time he does, Israel responds by hiding in fear. But things are about to change.

[39 : 04] And we know that because we know the story. A young man by the name of David comes on the scene. He arrives at the battlefield and he sees the same giant the rest of the Israelites saw. He hears the same words that the rest of the Israelites heard. He hears the same taunts.

He hears the same defiance against God, their living God. But instead of hiding out in fear, David rises to the challenge, doesn't he? I mean, if we didn't know the story so well, it would be really surprising, wouldn't it? I mean, he's just a young man. You know, shepherd boy. He rises to the challenge and he does something about this pagan bully, this giant. But the question is, what made David different from the rest of the Israelites there, the rest of the men there that day made him different? What made him think that he could do what everyone else thought could not be done? Defeat this enemy. And David saw the same events and heard the same things the rest of the people heard, but he perceived things very differently, didn't he? That's why this story is such a lesson for us. A spiritual lesson here. Because the difference is in how David defined Goliath, how he defined him. Not described him, defined him. That is, the difference was in David's viewpoint of him, his perspective of Goliath. So let's just consider several different ways that we might define Goliath. First of all, some even there that day, probably most, defined Goliath purely as an opponent, someone who stands against them. And this is voiced by the men in verse 25, surely he has come to defy Israel. He is our opponent. And so he's defined then, in that way, he's defined from a position of fear. Right? And that's really all they could see.

And all that they were experiencing. Fear. They saw Goliath merely as a threat, a very severe threat to their nation, to their armies, first of all. Each one probably seeing him as a merely a threat to their own personal well-being. And to the army and to the nation. And they saw him as a threat to their peace, their prosperity, their happiness. And sometimes we see giants only in that way.

As opponents. And so when this Philistine stood up before them, all they could see was him. That's all they could see. Just this guy. This Goliath. All they could see was their opponent. And the spiritual application is easy to see. Their fear kept them from seeing anything else.

[42 : 16] Not only had it obscured the promise of God in their lives. Covenant. Their Abrahamic covenant. But it had obscured God from their eyes. They couldn't see him. They couldn't see anything else but this giant. So they defined him from a position of fear. They defined him as an opponent.

Now David also defined him as an opponent. Didn't he? But not his own personal opponent. He saw him as the opponent of God. He took offense at that. That this man would blaspheme the living God. Second, some define Goliath as merely an obstacle. He's just in the way.

Israel saw Goliath as standing between them and what they wanted. You know, a myriad of things. Peace. Peace from their enemies. Tranquility. Tired of all this war going on. A threat to their prosperity. But David also saw him as an obstacle.

David saw Goliath as standing between him and what God wanted. See, there's the difference. They saw Goliath. Many Israelites saw Goliath as an obstacle standing between them and what they wanted. And David saw Goliath as an obstacle standing between him and what God wanted. what God wanted. And there's a big difference. And so David said, for who is this uncircumcised Philistine that should defy the armies of the living God? Essentially defying God. And so to David, the issue was bigger than Saul. It was bigger than the armies of Israel. It was bigger than all of those things put together. To David, the issue was about the glory of God.

[44 : 29] God. And that's the right perspective, isn't it? On Goliath. Right perspective on whomever or whatever our giants are. And we have them, don't we? And so this is the perspective of faith.

Not fear, but faith. So Goliath stood as an obstacle between God and his people, an obstacle to their faith. And so Goliath had to go. He had to go. Or Israel would be forever trapped in their fear. Third and finally, some define Goliath as an opportunity. And there are two ways to see our giants

as opportunities. For many of the Israelites, it was an opportunity for wealth. Even though none of them were about to take the king up on this promise. If anyone, by the way, if anyone had the credentials and had the physical wherewithal to take on Goliath, it was Saul. Remember how he was described? He was a tall man. Head, shoulder and head above, taller than anyone else. He was a big man. But he's hiding out in his tent, you know. But he gives this promise, you know. A promise of great riches. And so for some, the opportunity is just simply for wealth or for material gain. And at first glance, I guess we might think that it looked as though David was interested in the same thing. In fact, if you go back over, rehearse it back over, the story of it, he asked not once, but I think three times. Three times about what would be done for the one who killed Goliath. So maybe it sounds like that's what David was interested in, you know. The great riches and hey, maybe Saul's daughter is good looking and there I could get a princess for my wife. And then, you know, it'd be great for my father and family to not have to pay taxes. So maybe at first glance, we think that way.

And so the response was, in verse 25, the king will enrich him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel, free from taxes. But we have to understand something about David. Really have to understand something unique about him. Not just his own character, but his situation. He had been anointed, already anointed as king. Remember? That happened last chapter and it was done privately in the home of Jesse, his father. And that had to be kept a secret for a while. It wasn't time for him to come to the throne. It would have been hazardous to his health to come and claim the throne. But he'd already been anointed and David knew it. He knew it.

And he knew that he would be the king after Saul. And so, killing Goliath, in David's point of view, was a stepping stone in the direction of God's calling. God's purpose for his life.

[47 : 44] He knew what that purpose would be. So killing Goliath would bring him that much closer to achieving what God had promised him. In fact, in verse 29, after Eliab, his brother rebuked him, he said, you have no business being here, kid. Get back there to the sheep. He rebuked him. David said, is there not a cause? Now, we could take that to mean a number of things. I'm certainly, the cause was to stand against someone who defied a living God. It was a cause for God's honor.

Certainly. But the cause was David, and I think Eliab knew, though he probably disagreed with the choice, knew that David had been anointed. So David said, isn't there a cause here?

And here's the application of all this. We kind of put this in a nutshell. We need to realize that our giants, and we have them, we face our giants, are opportunities. They're opportunities for God to receive glory, for one thing. They're opportunities for God to, or for us to realize our potential as God has called us and equipped us and his purposes for our lives. And if we are fearful of our giants and hide from our giants and don't deal with our giants, we effectively can never discover and realize all that God has intended for us and called us to.

But the chief thing is to, that God would receive glory. We should always want that. No matter what the giant. So it's not, he is not glorified when I'm paralyzed by fear.

He's not glorified when you know, when we forget who God is. What he's promised. He is glorified when we forget about ourselves.

[49 : 45] And about our agendas. And our feelings. And our personal wants. And concern ourselves with his glory alone. Every giant in our lives is an opportunity for God to get glory.

in our lives. Through our lives. So Goliath described. Goliath defined. And the next time we'll see Goliath defeated. So we'll leave him standing for tonight.

Until next time. But we know the end of the story, don't we? So we don't have to worry. This is no cliffhanger. We know what's going to happen. Thank you.