



BIBLE STORIES EVERYONE OUGHT TO KNOW

Main and Oklahoma Church of Christ ^ Adult Bible Studies ^ Winter-Spring 2010

February 21, 2010

David and Goliath, 1 Samuel 16-17

Getting Started

The two books of Samuel tell us the story of David. He was a shepherd, musician, poet, and the greatest king in the history of Israel. David wrote Psalm 23, perhaps one of the most familiar of all Bible passages. The story of the young shepherd boy David and the giant Goliath is a favorite. The secular world sees in the story of David and Goliath the defeat of a champion or leader by an underdog. Have you considered that the real underdog in this story carried a fifteen-pound sword and stood over nine feet tall?

What's the story?

After being led by God-appointed leaders for hundreds of years, the nation of Israel rejects God's plan and cries out for a king. Saul, the first king of Israel, is described as impressive and a head taller than anyone else (1 Samuel 9:1-3). Yet Saul fails to live in step with the commands of God so God chooses another man to be king.

Even before we meet David, we are given an important piece of information. He is a man after God's heart (13:14). God tells Samuel to go anoint a son of Jesse as the next king. When Samuel arrives at the home, Jesse shows him the oldest son. Samuel thinks that this son is surely the one, but God says, "No." As each of the seven older sons comes forward, God tells Samuel, "No, not this one." God reminds Samuel that man looks at outward appearances, but the Lord considers the heart (16:7). God's chosen is the youngest son who is still out in the fields tending his father's flock. After Jesse calls David in from the pasture, Samuel anoints David. From that day forward, the Spirit of the Lord is upon David in power.

Time passes and Israel's enemies, the Philistines, gather their forces in war against Israel. This time they have a new weapon—Goliath, a giant who challenges Israel to a one-on-one, winner-take-all fight. For forty days Goliath dismays and terrifies Saul and all the Israelites. On the forty-first day, David comes to bring his brothers supplies and to take word of them home to his father. He hears the taunts of Goliath and wonders why the armies of God tolerate the defiance of this uncircumcised Philistine. David tells them he is ready to fight the Philistine. On the outside, David does not look like much of a champion. He is only a boy, untrained in battle and woefully under-armed. However, David has a heart that trusts God to defend him against Goliath because God has defended him in the past. Saul offers David his own armor, but David decides he cannot fight in this armor and takes instead his staff, sling and five smooth stones.

When Goliath sees that his opponent is only a boy, he despises him and curses him. The words of David as he confronts Goliath reveal the heart that God blesses. David declares victory because he comes to fight in the name of the Lord and the battle is the Lord's. As Goliath moves in for the kill, David rushes forward and with one stone kills the giant. This unexpected outcome sends the Philistines running and Israel wins a great battle.

So, what does this story say about God?

On this battlefield were two men anointed by God as leaders. Saul heard the frightening taunts of a giant and was afraid; David heard the ungodly mocking of Goliath against the people of God and acted. Saul sat in his tent for forty days wondering what to do. David recognized the care and protection of God in the past, trusted in his care for the future, and immediately expressed his willingness to fight Goliath. God wants us to stay focused on God always, and remember that the battle is the Lord's.

Now, what about our faith?

What giants are there in your life? While all of Israel concentrated on the size of Goliath, David's focus was on the size of his God. God calls us to focus on him. With God in control, the outcome is a foregone conclusion. After all, what is one nine-foot man compared to the God of the universe?

Monday: Readings I Samuel 16

1. Why does Jesse not have David present with all the other sons when Samuel comes?
2. Why is it so easy to judge people by their outward appearance?

Tuesday: I Samuel 13:13-14, Acts 13:22,

1. David is a man after God's own heart. What does this mean?
2. How can one cultivate a heart like God's?

Wednesday: I Samuel 17

1. What facts in the story seem to show that David should not fight Goliath?
2. What truths of God did David claim in his victory?

Thursday: I Samuel 17

1. What giants do we face in our lives?
2. How does God help us fight today?

Friday: I Samuel 17, Psalms 78:70-72, Psalms 23

1. David claimed that God was the source of his past victories. What victory given by God in your past gives you confidence for the future? Share these stories of faith with your family.
2. What qualities that David learned while being a shepherd would later help him in being an effective king?
3. Which of the qualities of our Lord as our good shepherd is most meaningful to you and why?