

## MESSAGE TRANSCRIPTS

Series: OT Southern Style

Part 4 David and Goliath

Tim Armstrong, Senior Pastor

Weekend August 22/23, 2009

When you think of David, what do you think of? You think of David of Goliath. That's what we really think of. Of all of the events that occurred in David's life, and there were many, when I think of David I think of David verses the giant. David and Goliath. And so, that's what we're going to study this morning. I want you to take your Bibles. I want you to turn with me to 1 Samuel, chapter 17. I've been telling you for the last couple weeks that when you go through an Old Testament narrative you really need to have it before you so that you can see the details. So many times, these stories are so familiar that we think we know it until we look at the details. And that's important in this story. It's found on page 239. If you didn't bring your Bibles there's one in the chair back in front of you. You can go right to 1 Samuel 17.

Now, when you look at a story like this you have to ask yourself what is its purpose. What is it that I can learn from it as a follower of Jesus Christ? That's going to be our focus but we need to understand the details. When you open to 1 Samuel 17 you open into a scene where the Israelites and the Philistine had drawn up opposite sides for battle in a valley called the valley of Elah. It's not a really large valley. Just to give you a sense of scale it would be about the size, say if you were the Israelites you'd be on this hill. The valley would be Park Avenue. The Philistines would be probably over in the shopping center. That's about as big as it is. It's not a large valley by any means. That's important because every day a nine and a half foot man named Goliath would come down into that valley and everyone on both sides, the Philistines on their hill, the Israelites on theirs could see this man. And he would come out and he was, he's the Darth Vader of scripture. He is the consummate evil man. He even dressed like it. Scriptures say that he's, one – he's humongous. His battle armament themselves weigh about one hundred and twenty five pounds. He has the javelin swung between his shoulder blades. He carries a spear the size of a weaver's beam and the spearhead weighs about twenty pounds. And he comes down in the middle of that valley, twice a day, morning and evening and he challenges the Israelites on the hill to come and fight him. He says if there's anyone brave enough to come and to fight me and you kill me, all of us, all of the Philistines will become your slaves. BUT, if I kill your champion then you become our slaves. Then he turns it and he says you've not done this. The scripture says this, defies the living God. It's as if he ridicules and mocks them as if Israel does not have a god. He does that day in and day out.

Now, the story opens for us in verse 11 of chapter 17 and we get the whole feel of what's going on in this dramatic scene. It says when Saul and all Israel heard these words of Philistines they were dismayed and greatly afraid. That gives you the sense of what's going on. Now, enter David into the scene. David, at this point was a young man, I would say somewhere between sixteen and eighteen. He had never really been to battle. He at this point had not been used by God in any significant way. In fact, what his profession was for his family was that of a sheep herder. He was a shepherd. You have to remove

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from your mind the idyllic kind of concept that he would sit on a side of a grassy hill and watch the sheep. That's not the case. In fact, that's not even the case for shepherds today in Israel. It's a very treacherous job. David talked about how he would have to often go out to fight for the animals' lives. He would fight with lions and tigers and bears....just wanted to see if you're awake. Right. And he would be out there. So he, you know, this could be treacherous to himself. But still, it wasn't a job that took a lot of skill.

Now, his father, Jesse had asked him to go to the battle lines because his three older brothers were there fighting with Saul. And he was there to go and take provision but more than anything else he was to bring back word to his father how his brothers were doing. Now, we bring him into the story at about verse 19 and here we're going to get into some details so follow along. Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. And David rose early in the morning and left the sheep with a keeper and took the provisions and went, as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the encampment as the host was going out to the battle line, shouting the way cry. And Israel and the Philistines drew up for battle, army against army. And David left eh things in charge of the keeper of the baggage and ran to the ranks and went and greeted his brothers. As he talked with them, behold, the champion, the Philistines of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines and spoke the same words as before. As he had been doing the last forty days. And it said, And David heard him. The idea here is David heard him really for the first time. This was the first time he experienced what all the men had been experiencing for that about month and a half. And he was shocked by it.

And verse 24 it says, All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were much afraid. And the men of Israel said, they were starting to have conversations, they said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel." And they were afraid of him. And then the conversation turns. "And the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches, and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel." Do you see what they're saying? They're saying whoever is brave enough to go up and fight against this man, he's going to be made wealthy by the king. He's going to receive the king's daughter and his family won't have to pay taxes in Israel from that point forward. Now, David is in on this conversation and he hears this and he's not quite sure how to take this. He's a bit shocked and he says to him, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach of Israel?" You need to know this is less of a question and more of a statement. There's a tone of rebuke as if he's saying you're concerned about what? And he says, "For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" He says, don't you see who, this is some uncircumcised, the idea is that some person who's outside the covenant promise of God. He doesn't have God on his side.

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Who is this man who defies, who ridicules our God, the living God of Israel? It's as almost as if he's saying why aren't any of you doing anything about this? Which, by the way, I want you to know this, David doesn't mention Goliath's size. He doesn't say that he was a warrior. He doesn't say anything about his javelin or his spear. He doesn't say anything about that. What David is absolutely aghast by is that no one would stand up against him when he's blaspheming their holy God. And so he continues to ask that question. And he begins to ask it around his older brother hears about it.

Verse 28. And it says Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke to the men. And Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, "Why do you come down here? And with whom have you left a few sheep in the wilderness? I know your presumption and the evil of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle." Now, this sounds like an older brother, doesn't it? This is the older brother saying, what in the world are you doing? Where did you leave the sheep? I know why you're here. You're here to see the blood bath. He says go home. And look at David, how David answers. By the way, I hear this in my home every day. David turns to his older brother and he says, "What have I done now?" As if this happens all the time for him. And he says, "Wasn't I just asking a question?" And he turns from his brother and continues to ask the question. He is mystified by this.

Now, we come here to verse 31 and I think we see the whole text turn because somewhere in David's questioning of these men of war, almost a sense of rebuke. Word gets back to the king and Saul calls him to his tent. That's what we read in verse 31. When the words that David spoke were heard they repeated them before Saul and he sent for him. Now, can you imagine being a young man, not even part of that military campaign and the king calls for you. He goes into the king's tent and notice what he says in verse 32. And David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him." Do you know what that is? He's quoting scripture to him. He's quoting Deuteronomy 23. I mean, if there isn't a sense of insolence there certainly is now. He goes before the king and he says, king, don't you remember what the scriptures say? Let no man's heart fail because of him, because of this enemy of ours. How would you have reacted if you were Saul? At that moment you might have been enraged with a sense of anger until David says in the next line when he says, "Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." David turns the tables as if to say if no one else is going to go I'll go. Now, I don't know what that must have made Saul feel like at that moment but let me give you a little back story.

Saul should have been the man down in the valley fighting Goliath. If you read a little history about Saul, the first king of Israel it says he was head and shoulders above the rest of the people. In other words he had a very kingly presence to him. And here is this little shepherd boy taking his place. He's saying I'll do it if no one else will do it. Now Saul immediately rejects this and he says, rightfully so, "You are not able to go against the

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Philistine,” verse 33, “for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth.” But notice this. David won’t relent. He gives him his credentials. He says,

“You’re servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him.” He’s telling him how he acted as a shepherd. And then he says, “Your servant has struck both down lions and bears and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the name of the living God.” And David said, “The Lord who delivered me from the paw of a lion, the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of the Philistine.” Now, you need to know this must have been an impressive speech because Saul was about to make the greatest military gamble of his career. He was going to let him do it. He was going to let this little shepherd go and do what no other warrior was willing to do. In fact, the next scene is almost hilarious when you come down to just thinking about it. Because Saul takes his armor and he puts it on David. You have to remember that Saul was a tall man. David’s just a small boy. And I can picture him putting the helmet on his head and the helmet being too big. And the breastplate over him and that’s too big. And he puts the sword, you know, and that’s too heavy for him and literally the text says David says, I can’t use these. I can’t even walk. And what does the scripture say? Round about verse 39, end of verse 39-40 says David put them off. Then he took his staff in his hand and he choose five smooth stones from the brook and put them in his shepherd’s pouch. His sling was in his hand and he approached the Philistine. What did he take with him? He took with him ordinary objects that a shepherd would use.

I tell you, if you’re looking for a principle – there it is. What is it that God uses most? God uses ordinary people who are willing to step out in faith and trust Him. That’s what that says. One of my favorite passages in the scriptures, in fact I don’t highlight much in my Bible. I make notes and I’ve got scribbles all around it but I have one passage highlighted. And it’s a passage that personally I tend to gain strength from. You don’t necessarily have to turn there if you don’t want to but I’ll just read it for you. I’ve read it many times. You’ve probably heard me read this. It’s from 1 Corinthians, chapter 1, verse 26. Paul’s writing, he says, For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards. Not many of you were powerful, not many of you were of noble birth. But god chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are. In other words, God uses the ordinary more often than not to glorify himself.

So David picks up his staff and his sling and he walks into battle. Now it starts to really get good. Verse 41. And the Philistine moved forward and came near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. And when the Philistine looked and saw David, he

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disdained him, for he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. In other words, he didn't have that battle scarred appearance. And the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" He's almost offended that the Israelites would send him David. Is this all you think of me, like I'm a dog that you can chase me away with sticks? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. The Philistine said to David, now watch this. This is biblical trash talk going on here. He says, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beast of the field." Then David, who does not back down, said to the Philistine with his own trash talk, "You come to me with a sword and 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 down and cut off your head." I mean, how's that? And he says "I'll give the dead body to the host of the Philistines so that everyone standing on that hill, this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know," watch this, "that the Lord saves not with sword or spear: For the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hand." What a great sense of victory. Even before he starts the battle he knows who's in charge. He says this is the Lord's battle.

Remember what Paul said to the Corinthians? For though we walk in the flesh we're not waging war according to the flesh for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. David understood this. And he walked boldly into battle with the giant.

Verse 48. It actually is over very quickly. If Hollywood was doing this, I mean, this would be chapters. But here's just a couple verses. When the Philistines arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly. I love that. He was anxious. He ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead. First try. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground. And it says, so David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling, with a stone and struck the Philistine and killed him. There was no sword in the hand of David. Then David, ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it. When the Philistine saw that their champion was dead they fled. Like I said if Hollywood could have put this together they would have dramatized this to the point, but you know what? I think there is a lot of drama going on here. I mean, I think there is a lot of suspense. There is a lot of drama going here. I think there is a lot of suspense. There is a lot of a sense of what is about to happen. What is God going to do in the next few moments?

Actually, Hollywood did make a movie with this scene. They didn't get all of the details just right but I love it because they actually shoot on location in the valley Elah. It's a

great valley to stand in the middle of and see the two hillsides; just a picture that this is where David and Goliath fought their battle. Well, I want to take you there this morning. I want you to get the sense of the scenery, feel the moment of impact. Watch the side screens.

### **Video: David fights Goliath**

Wouldn't you have loved to have been there? I think of all the biblical scenes I think probably my top three has got to be, one of them has to be this scene right here. To stand in that valley and to watch God move through a shepherd boy. This would be just the impact, I think of all of our faith in one package. Just one small boy. So that's the detail. That's what we know about the story, the events. But now we have to ask some of the most important question. That is why did he do it? Why did he walk down that hill into the valley to face the giant? And, not only that, what can we learn from it? If you're going to take notes this is the time to take notes because I'm going to give you three things to answer the question of why and then we're going to learn one of how we can apply it.

Why did David walk into that valley? Well, number one because of a promise. He remembered the promise of God. It's something that nobody else standing in that battle line on Israel's side could even fathom or bring to their own mind but David does. He quotes Deuteronomy chapter 20, verse 1 to Saul. You don't have to turn there. Let me just give you just the sense of it. Moses is speaking to the people of Israel and he tells them of a promise. David brings this to mind. Moses says, "When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the Lord your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people and shall say to them, 'Hear, o Israel, today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint.'" Let not your heart be troubled. What is that? That is the very same words the David said to Saul. Says, "do not fear or panic or be in dread of them, for the Lord your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you the," what? "the victory." You see, David walked into the valley because he already knew God had won the victory. He remembered the promise and isn't that the same promise that we have in the New Testament? What did Jesus say over and over again? He said fear not. Don't be afraid. Then he says in Matthew 28 I am with you always. You have already won the battle against your giants through me.

Second thing that we learn. Not only a promise but we know why David walked through that valley because of a personal history. He said it. He said I've got personal history of God working through my life. The lion and the bear, they would come after the sheep. I

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would go after them. God would deliver me from the paw of the lion or the paw of the bear. He knew that walking into the valley and so he felt like he could trust God. Don't we have the same thing when we're facing our giant? That we have a promise and that we have a personal history that God has responded over and over again to be consistent and faithful to us.

And the third thing that we know why he walked into that valley because of a principle. There's a promise, a personal history and a principle. You say, what's the principle? God's name wasn't being honored in that valley. David heard this for the first time and he was not going to stand for Goliath's insult. It was a matter of principle to defend the name of Yahweh and yet our giants do the exact same thing to us. Our giants cry out blasphemy as if they're saying you can't trust God. You can't believe in what he says. See, David walked into that valley. He walked boldly because he knew one thing. That he did not fight for victory. He fought from victory and that made all the difference in the world. So, you have to ask yourself what giants am I battling? Where do I feel small? You know, because when we think about David and Goliath, I mean, euphemistically we say that about the little guy and the big guy. Well, it's the same in our spiritual life. Sometimes we feel very small against the giants in our life. What are the giants? Is it the giant of uncertainty or worry or fear? Is it the giant of finance or future? Isn't that what's going on right now? Fear, finances, future so there's these giants, we don't know what's about to happen. Or maybe it's anger or despair or maybe there's an addiction in your life or a marriage that's crumbling or just answers that you need and you just sense there's this giant bearing down upon you. Really, where do feel small. What giant's in your life? What do you need to remember?

You need to remember this one thing. You do not fight for victory against those giants. You fight from victory. The victory is already yours. The battle is already yours. That's what Jesus said. Jesus said I have said these things to you that in you, you may have peace. Take heart. I have overcome the world.

I don't know what you're battling this morning but you've already won. As a follower of Christ the victory is already yours. March boldly into that valley. Slay the giant. Jesus has given you that power. Let's pray.