

# THE GIANT KILLER

I SAMUEL 17

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## INTRODUCTION

Let us take a detailed look at one of the most famous stories in the Bible. A story often misunderstood but bragged about. A story now-a-days considered unreal for adults and relegated to the region of Biblical myths and fairytales for children.

For David, one look at Goliath was enough. Hearing Goliath's blasphemous tirade was enough to convince David of the obvious. God would not stand for that! This target is so big you can't miss it. The bigger the problem the easier it is to hit the mark and score a victory. Now if there had been a dwarf you might have a doubt, but with a giant how can you miss? It is simply impossible. Our problem is this; we feel that we can handle little difficulties but we are afraid of the big problems life throws at us. What made David and others so victorious while we often linger in languor? Let us take a closer look at: What makes a giant killer? ----- Courage — Character — Faith

## I. THESE ARE DARK DAYS:

The years 1989-2002 — were years of extreme economic difficulties in the former Soviet Union.

Divorce is everywhere — even in our churches now, and God hates it.

Homosexuality is now a fact of life.

Drugs & AIDS are accepted as part of society.

Children's rights are talked about regularly.

Millions and millions of murders through abortion.

Filthy movies + TV is watched now also by believers.

Cold + powerless churches — often the biggest and oldest churches are the least active spiritually.

Yes there are giants stalking the land. Evil giants that need to be defeated. What we need today are GIANT KILLERS.

## II. MY GOD IS ABLE - I SAM. 17:26

Said David: "Goliath? I have never seen such a target before" - vs. 26. David immediately sees a spiritual issue. Where others see a physical enemy David sees a spiritual attack; he sees a disgracing of the people of God. He is ashamed. His character rises up within him and he thinks, "This is not real. This cannot be. Something must be done, and done at once." He looks at someone defying and disgracing his precious Lord and Savior, and faith tells him that God is honor bound to gloriously defend His name and extinguish this evil. Someone cursing and swearing, defiling the holy things of God? God will not stand for this. God will surely rebuke this man, destroy this evil, and redeem His people. Here is a man of **character and faith**, and these two elements combined can, in this extreme situation, only produce one thing — courage. David is "off to the races." From being a bystander he has become a participant. His heart is provoked. There is no turning back.

## III. IF YOU WILL DO SOMETHING FOR GOD, YOU WILL GET CRITICIZED. vs. 28

Jealousy unfortunately is a common feature among God's people. When someone with courage, faith and character moves ahead for God, he is almost invariably criticized. Often those closest to him are his strongest critics. They burn with anger at his courage and audacity to trust God. Is there anything easier than to accuse a brother of pride? Those plagued by lack of character and fear don't seem to recognize faith but confuse it with pride. Fear seems to be a pretty good indicator of the weakness of one's faith. If you will do something for God you will be criticized. Count on it. Be ready for it.



## IV. REMEMBER THE PAST WHEN FACING A GIANT. vs 34-37

We forget what God has done in the past. Do you have a list of unique things the Lord has done for you? Has He done anything for you? Ungratefulness makes us forget what God has done for us in the past. Pride makes us unaware of what God has done in our lives. Often we stammer and stutter when we are put on the spot about God's doings in our lives. It shows our lack of appreciation, our lack of spiritual orientation. David was full of the things of the Lord. He remembered the many times God assisted and delivered him.

### A. David remembered he had been tried before.

Seeing Goliath was not a new shocking thing to David. He had been in other devastating situations and discovered that with God there is always victory.

## **B. David remembered he had been tried frequently.**

David, as young as he was, had had many experiences with difficulties. Like Joseph he was the youngest in the family and like Joseph his brothers did not like him. Like Joseph God had shown him and his brothers that he was to become a ruler. David had gotten the lowliest job in his family — the shepherd's job. But David made the best of his situation. He did his job in a super way. He acquitted himself in the best way possible. He protected his father's possessions. He was not like the hireling shepherd Jesus talked about. Notice how casually David relates this story. It is more than likely that occasionally a bear or a lion or some other animal came and he just had to fight them off. The indication is that it was not a unique isolated case but an activity that had occurred more than once.

## **C. David remembered he had risked it all.**

David had actually run after those wild beasts. Probably all of us would have run away from them but he actually ran after them. He personally grabbed those little lambs and jerked them right out of their jaws. That's close up. You don't want to get any closer. He could easily have said, 'Well, it's too late now. That lamb is hurt and dying anyway. Nothing I can do now.' Not David! He felt responsible. "This is my lamb. Keep your dirty claws off of it. Who do you think you are anyway?" And he clobbered them. Can you just see this young boy pounding the face of a lion with his bare fists and a little stick? "Give me back my lamb and be quick about it!" Then these ferocious beasts turned on him. What would you think any self respecting king of the jungle would do when he meets a fourteen year old? Would you expect it to say, "All right, I am sorry. Here, you can have your lamb back, I'll go somewhere else?" Not likely! This was a life or death event. David hadn't read the New Testament yet but he was convinced that he could do all things through Christ — Phil. 4:13. He risked it all, and he risked it for God.

## **D. David remembered he had gone it alone.**

In those dark lonely evenings he was alone with the flock. There were no other helpers. Usually lion fighters are scarce. They seem to be even more scarce when you need them. You wouldn't expect David to say to this bear, "Hey, wait a minute till I get some help from town." Such a bear might perhaps answer, "Yeah, go ahead. I'll have supper while I wait, okay?" No, rather it was, if you are going to do it, do it now, do it at once, do it alone! There was no one to help and there was no time for prayer. David had done that! He had gone it alone. He had had courage and faith and done it and God delivered him, saved the lamb and gave the bear as a prize to boot.

## **E. David remembered he had nothing visible.**

Day after day out there in the wilderness David had only a light pouch with his daily necessities. If you have seen a shepherd you know that they know just how to carry the very minimum. David had no sword, bow and arrow or spear for a long distance attack. Of course he had his harp, but harps are not known as good weapons to fight off lions and bears. No, it was not his physical weaponry, personal skill or strength that gave the victory. David wasn't big like Goliath and he wasn't strong like Samson, but he also knew that it didn't depend upon size and that he was a man of God. He trusted in the Lord to overcome evil and God saved him and honored him

## **F. David remembered his tactics were natural.**

David employed no special methods to kill these wild beasts. He just did the normal, natural thing. It had been a normal, natural reaction for him to protect and save his little lambs. But God honored that faithfulness and dedication to his job. He was just who he was, a normal young man, but because he believed God he became like Stephen — a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit and therefore full of power.

## **G. David remembered his confidence in God-gained Victory.**

David seems to have had very little except a club perhaps, and courage and character and faith. David was strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. For him it was not a fight against a lion or bear, not against flesh and blood. He put on the full armor of God ready to fight against the powers of darkness, against spiritual

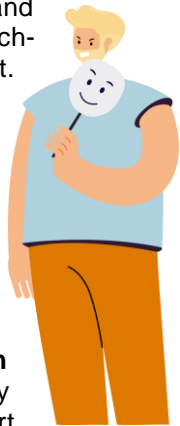
forces of evil like in Eph. 6:12. The strength of the Lord was upon him and God granted him victory. The glory belongs to God not David.

These verses 34–37 show the Biblical principle that: The more experienced we become in the exercise of faith, the greater faith we can exercise.

## V. SAUL'S ARMOR, i.e. HUMAN ANSWERS & EQUIPMENT. vs. 38

### A. Trying to be something we are not.

Saul was trying to make David into something that he wasn't. To Saul's worldly mind you could not fight a giant unless you were trained, had the proper skill, and the proper equipment. People, institutions, and organizations are trying to mold you into something you are not. Oh, how we love better western technology and equipment. When God has a job, He wants a person, not some sophisticated equipment. God looks for people not material things. Men are looking for better methods; God is looking for better men.



### B. Always trying to be someone else.

It is a common tendency among us to want to be something else than what we are. We want to preach like Billy Graham, we want to be educated in seminary, we want to have a degree and we want all those other things. If we only had a computer, more money or better equipment, aah, **then** we could do so much better. We are always trying to be someone else. God wants us just the way we are. God wants us to be available for him as we are so He can get the glory. David had his heart set on obtaining glory for God that day.

## VI. YOUR SERVANT WILL GO LIGHT. vs. 39

### A. I.e. God can use me — just the way I am.

David knew that the victory was in God's hand. He did not know what God was going to do to gain this victory, but he knew God could use him in any way that He chose and that victory would come in one way or another. David decided to go as he was with no special stuff. Let people laugh at him. Let it be ridiculous. With God nothing is too small. David knew and acted out the principle that "My power is made perfect in weakness," from II Cor. 12:9.

### B. In spite of all my incapability.

David went out there more or less to see what God would do. God was going to bring about a victory and he needed an instrument, a person to do it through. David was willing to go and be used in spite of all his incapacities. How unlike David we tend to be. How often we stress and rely on our capabilities plus, of course, a short prayer. David relied on "My grace is sufficient for you." II Cor. 12:9

## VII. THE BATTLE STAGE

Where did David get his courage? What was so different between David and Saul? What was really going on in David's heart? Why was one smitten with outrage, courage and faith while the other cowered in fear?

## A. Enter: Saul the rejected king. Chap.16:11

Saul had been rejected as king. Great big, beautiful and tall King Saul had rebelled against God, and rebellion is like witchcraft. Disobeying God is simply selecting another god — an idol -- and worshipping that. That is witchcraft and God is forced to reject such a person. Saul was out — and he knew it! He was still in the position, he still had the title, presumably people still respected him, at least most of them still obeyed him. But his power was gone, his authority was slipping, problems had come in. Victory had left and fear had entered. What a picture of many backslidden church leaders. They are still on the platform, they still preach, but the power of the Holy Spirit is gone and their authority is slipping. Fear comes in, pervades their church, becomes its characteristic and faith departs. Faith is gone, courage is gone and character is gone. Chapter 16:14 tells us that the Holy Spirit had departed from Saul and an injurious spirit tormented him.

For forty days King Saul is controlled by fear, shakes and shivers as he hears the cursing, swearing and disdainful derogatory words from a perverted self-inflated potbellied egotist. Fear tells him that very likely these are his last days, God will now destroy him. Judgment is coming swift and sure. He is convinced of it. Feelings tell him that fear is right, he is a goner. A few more days, going, going, going and — gone. Bye, bye, King Saul. Verse 11 shows how Saul's fear is passed on to his general, officers and all his soldiers. Their leader's fear paralyzes them. His influence spreads through their camp like a disease and thousands of men run with knees buckling to hide in shame. Truly, like we read in an earlier portion, "the glory of the Lord has departed from Israel," **or is it your church** — I Sam. 4:21-22? What a picture of spiritual defeat! What a shameful, sad situation brother David encountered that morning when he entered that camp.

## B. Enter: David the anointed king. 16:13

David on the other hand has been anointed as king and that could mean only one thing. God had to keep his promise and keep him alive and therefore give him the victory over Goliath. If not, then God was a liar, he would be killed and the Philistines would rule. David knew that was not possible. Furthermore, David had experienced exceptional, great power after the Holy Spirit had come upon him. I Sam. 16:13 David was deeply upset by the disgrace Goliath brought upon God's people. It moved him to great anger — vs. 26. By faith he encouraged the fearful and set an example for them — vs. 32. His faith convinced him that God would deliver him from this great evil person. So, armed with his courage, character and faith, plus a little shoestring wrapped around his pinky, young David crosses the little brook which was the boundary between the two armies. He even stops to pick up a few more interesting pebbles and add them to his collection.

## C. Enter: The waiting masses

The masses of lukewarm bystanders and spectators wait upon the action of faith.

Suspense hangs like a heavy thundercloud over the valley. Here you have perhaps 50,000 soldiers watching a young man who is not yet dry behind his ears approaching a high ranking veteran army officer — a renowned giant of man. On one side soldiers of fear are rolling up their tents ready for flight. It is over now; we have lost as we thought we would. On the other side a sigh of relief engulfs the camp — ah, no match for our hero, and a spirit of relaxation begins to creep over them. It is over now; we will win as we had hoped. How often are spiritual battles against the powers of darkness just like that? We feel that we are in the balances and wonder if the verdict will be "Mene, mene, tekel upharsin" - found wanting, or "well done, good and faithful servant." The suspense is almost unbearable. In a few more minutes the fate of thousands and thousands of people will be decided.

## D. Enter: Godless Giant Goliath.

There was one more key player on the battlefield that day. A player who had been fed pride and arrogance all his life. From his baby days on he had been pushed to the top and was used to bullying people around. Now he had taken it upon himself to call the shots and challenge another almost giant named Saul. He thought Saul was in another league. He didn't realize that he and Saul would be buddies for all of eternity. So he despised him and his people. But even that wasn't good enough. He had to lift himself up above God and curse and swear and use vile language. But this time he is stopped in the middle of his speech by an incredible sight. A young man is coming his way, a very handsome good-looking young fellow — God surely has good taste — but he is only slightly bigger than a boy. Suddenly egotism grabs him and he is offended to the core. With a vile oath, "What in the world, they are sending a kid over here with some sticks? Is this a joke? Who do they think they are?" He begins cursing and swearing and identifying his allegiance with the forces of darkness ready to once and for all crush the people of God. Nothing is stopping him now to defy

the Almighty Himself! But in a moment his great big giant of an evil man and challenger of God people suddenly falls down.

#### E. Enter: Character — Courage — Faith. Vs 45-47

David shouts out his courage for all to hear: *"I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty."*

David shouts out his faith: *"This day the Lord will hand you over to me and I will strike you down."*

David shouts out the reason: *"Because you have defied God the Lord Almighty."*

David shouts out the results: *"The whole world will know that there is a God in Israel."*

David shouts out the consequences: *"Everyone here will know that it is not equipment that saves but the Lord God."*

David shouts out his boast: *"God will give all of you into our hands."*

Then the young man quickly runs forward ferociously swinging his arms. Things happen fast as lightning and before anyone realizes what takes place the mighty army veteran falls forward and hits the earth with an awesome thud. His armor bearer has vanished from the scene. The young man quickly cuts off the giant's head and holds up the symbol of victory. God has done it again — vindicated His name.

## VIII. RESULTS: YOU ALWAYS GAIN WHEN YOU RELY ON GOD

So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone. Anybody want to suggest something simpler than that? A piece of shoestring and a stone. That's our great God, stooping to use the tiniest, littlest things, the most insignificant little people. Once He even used a jawbone. Who wants to imitate David? Who wants to go out there without tools, without sponsors and just be used by God? Any takers? No old guys, no mature church leaders were used, Jesus passed by all the Pharisees. God used a young boy, a stone, and something like a shoestring. He used no seminary degrees, no high recommendations from headquarters, no big stuff. Just a local boy full of anger because his God was being humiliated publicly and he was not going to take that sitting down. Feel any holy anger coming on? Praise God if you would go out there and slay some giants. There are Goliaths waiting in nearly every town and city of our country. Literally armies of Christians are cowardly groping about. We need some men with stones and shoestring to go out and triumph. **Triumph**, brother that is the word. Not "work," "try," "pray," but **"triumph,"** that is the word. The bottom line total = **triumph or nothing**.

## CONCLUSION:

### **Courage — Character — Faith**

Two examples come ringing down through the centuries; Saul's and David's — which will it be for you? Go home and measure yourself. Courage -- have you got it? Is it plus, minus, or an average nothing. Character -- do you even know what it is? Would you recognize it if it bit you? How would you define it? I suggest measuring yourself against the 60 character qualities of Christ and finding out who you are! Faith — are you among the faithful or among the fearful? Fearful of new things, fearful of changes, fearful of many unbelievers attending your church, fearful of many new churches. And then there is the category "full of faith." I hope you are in that category. I hope today you will join David's band of faithful men. Under David there was a great group of mighty men. Would you like to become one of them? The Holy Spirit is ready for you. Nowhere in the Bible, either before or after, do we read about such a group of "mighty men." Where did they come from? David seemed to attract them almost like flies. Would you like to be surrounded with a group of "mighty men?" **Stand up and be counted.** Let yourself become the leader God is looking for. **God is looking for "mighty men" today.** Saul didn't make it. David did, and you can too. Courage, my brother! That's the watchword — courage, character, faith. AMEN!

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

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