

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 12TH, 2023 // 1 SAMUEL

GATHERING FORCES (1 SAMUEL 17:1-11) A TURNING POINT

Chapter 17 is a turning point in 1 Samuel, where we start to see the contrast between Saul's disobedience in leadership and David's faithfulness through obedient leadership.

- Though we don't know exactly how much time has passed since the end of Chapter 16, we see the **enemies of Israel are attempting to disrupt their peace.**

SAUL'S LEADERSHIP IS TESTED

Israel requested a king for themselves who would be impressive to the nations around them and go into battle to fight for them.

- Saul's leadership would be tested as the Philistines gathered for war on a hill opposite the Israelite armies. **Our true character is revealed in times of adversity, not peace.**

THE PHILISTINE CHAMPION EMERGED

From out of the Philistine camp, their champion emerged. The Hebrew word for *champion* means "the middleman or the man between two." A champion would be someone who stands between two armies and fights as a representative of their army.

- Hebrews 12:2 refers to Jesus as "**the champion who initiates and perfects our faith**" (NLT).

IS GOLIATH A NEPHILIM?

Goliath was a gigantic warrior, but does that mean he was a Nephilim, the offspring of "**the sons of God**" and "**the daughters of men**" (Genesis 6:1-4) who were killed in the flood?

- Genesis 6:4 says that the Nephilim existed before the flood and afterward because **the term was attached to any "giant warriors"** (Numbers 13:32-33).

"I DEFY THE RANKS OF ISRAEL..."

Goliath attempted to intimidate and humiliate the Israelite army into submission.

- The Hebrew verb for "*defy*" means to "*heap shame*." Goliath wanted the warriors of Israel to give up before the fight even began. **We cannot allow the enemy to intimidate or shame us into forfeiting a battle that has already been won.**

THE ONCE-SUCCESSFUL LEADER COWERS IN FEAR

Saul was a **head taller than all of Israel** (1 Samuel 9:2) and, by appearance, **was the best candidate to stand in as Israel's champion.** After all, this is why they appointed him as king.

- **Without the Spirit of God** (1 Samuel 16:14), this once successful military leader **lost his courage and was terrified**, and his army followed after their commander.

INTIMIDATION (1 SAMUEL 17:12-24)

DAVID, THE ARMOR-BEARER

The narrative now turns to David's response to the Philistine's threats against Israel.

- We see a brief reintroduction to who David is (the youngest of eight sons of Jesse), and we are told that David's **three oldest brothers are on the front lines of the battle** with the Philistines while **he keeps going back and forth from Saul to tend to his father's sheep.**

JESSE SENDS RATIONS TO HIS SONS

Every morning for 40 days, Goliath would come out to taunt Saul and his army. The standoff had carried on for so long that each family was responsible for bringing supplies to their sons.

- David was sent to **give supplies to his brothers, a gift for the field commander, and to bring back confirmation of his brothers' well-being.**

THE HEART OF A SHEPHERD

We should notice the detail given to us about David in verse 20, which says he "**left the flock with someone to keep it.**"

- Even when David was called away, **he ensured his father's sheep were cared for. A good shepherd will never leave his flock unattended to be susceptible to attack.**

NO ONE WOULD STAND AGAINST HIM

As David reached his brothers, Goliath emerged as he had for the last 40 days.

- David watched as the Israelite army retreated in fear. Verse 24 says, "**all the Israelite men**" saw Goliath and retreated. **There was not one man among the Israelites who would stand up against their enemy.**

FACING FEARS (1 SAMUEL 17:25-32)

SAUL BRIBED MEN TO BE BRAVE

Saul now resorted to bribing someone to step up and take his place in battle, offering money, a bride, and tax exemption to the person who killed Goliath.

- David overhears that there is a payment for the warrior who fights Goliath, and he asks for the soldiers to repeat it. **He didn't ask because he desired the payment, but he was shocked that payment was necessary.**

RECOGNIZE INADEQUACIES

Saul's deficiency in leadership is revealed in his desperation and the extreme nature of the reward he offered.

- **When our inadequacies are revealed, we will resort to acting out in desperation and in extreme ways if we are not reliant on God, who is more than adequate.**

NO "SHAME" WILL COME TO GOD'S ARMIES

While the other men of Israel focused on the dangers of war or personal gain from defeating Goliath, David was focused on "**the living God.**"

- Circumcision was a covenantal indicator of being part of God's family. By saying he's an "**uncircumcised Philistine,**" he's essentially asking, "**How can this warrior be victorious when God is with us?**"

"I KNOW YOUR ARROGANCE AND YOUR EVIL HEART"

David's question struck a nerve with his brother, and **those around him misunderstood his heart** in the matter. Eliab thought he came just to be entertained by battle.

- Instead of seeing that David had a heart for God, **Eliab thought he was attempting to motivate someone to step up so he could watch the battle.**

COURAGEOUS FAITH

David's questioning is reported to Saul, so he sends for David and has him brought to him. David's response to Saul shows that his heart is in the right place.

- First, he tells them they need not lose heart because of this Philistine, and then **this boy surprises everyone by declaring he will fight Goliath.**

PEACE IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY

- **What is our reaction when our peace is disrupted? Do we automatically feel defeated, fearful, exhausted, or angry?**
- True peace is not found in the absence of conflict. True peace is found in the ability to rest in Christ and to be content in any situation (Philippians 4:11), even amid chaos and conflict.

FAITH IN THE FACE OF FEAR

- Faith is not the absence of fear.
- David himself wrote, "**When I am afraid, I will trust in you**" (Psalms 56:3).
- Scripture is very clear that our faith is grown and strengthened through trials.
- **Faith is knowing who our God is!**
- **With a proper view of God, the giants before us don't seem so big.**