



LESSON 18

David fights for God's honor

1 SAMUEL 17:1-58



God's people live for His glory and depend on His strength.



"Then David said to the Philistine, '...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... that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand'" (1 Sam 17:45–47).

Supporting Truths

1. God's glory is the reason for everything.
2. God fights for His glory.
3. God's people are jealous for God's glory.
4. A right view of God's glory provides a right view of the world around us.
5. God glorifies Himself by helping the humble and crushing the proud.

Objectives

1. State David's reason for fighting Goliath.
2. Explain who really won the victory over Goliath.
3. Contrast David's reaction to Goliath with the rest of the army's reaction.
4. List the characters who saw the situation only in terms of outward appearances.
5. Explain how this story illustrates Hannah's song (1 Sam 2:1–10).

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Lesson Summary

Saul, his army, and the army of the Philistines were mesmerized by Goliath's gigantic size and impressive armor. But David wasn't. He saw the whole battle in terms of God's glory. His heart was so devoted to God that he could not stand idly by while Goliath insulted the living God. So David risked his life for the sake of God's glory, and God gave David success, because God fights for His glory and gives strength to those whose hearts are His.

Spotlight on the Gospel

David is another link in the line from Adam to Christ. By giving David victory over Goliath, God preserved the line of Christ and kept His promise to send a Messiah. Even more than David, Jesus lived for God's glory and trusted God for victory. As a result, He conquered sin, Satan, and death. Because He did, we can trust in Him to save us. And when He saves, we are to follow in His steps, living for God's glory and trusting God for the victory.

LAST WEEK



God sees David's heart
1 Samuel 16:1-23

THIS WEEK



David fights for God's honor
1 Samuel 17:1-58

NEXT WEEK



God gives David a friend
1 Samuel 18:1-20:42

UNITED KINGDOM

Lesson Commentary

God's people live for His glory and depend on His strength.

God had always planned to graciously bless Israel, and one day the whole world, through a king. Unfortunately, Israel's sinful motives left them with a king with a rebellious heart. Saul cared more about his own plans than about God's honor, so God rejected him and chose David in his place. Unlike Saul, David was a man after God's own heart. Because David honored God from the heart, he was quick to fight for God's glory, even against gigantic Goliath.

Goliath Attacked God's Glory (17:1–11)

The Philistines had returned to their favorite pastime—invading Judah (1 Sam 17:1–3). And like so many times before, God's people were powerless before their enemies.

This time the Philistines brought a champion of terrifying proportions. Goliath was 9 feet 9 inches tall, at a time when 6 feet was unusually tall. Also, at a time when Israelite soldiers did not have metal weapons or armor (13:22), Goliath's armament was stunning. His bronze scale armor weighed 125 pounds, over twice as heavy as even a large soldier would wear. Goliath also wore a helmet on his head and greaves on his shins, and he had a massive shield carried by his armor-bearer. He was loaded with weapons—a straight sword, a javelin, and a massive spear. His spearhead alone weighed 15 pounds, compared to about 1 pound for a typical spearhead. By all outward appearances, this warrior was unbeatable.

But appearance matters very little. What matters is a heart for God. The book of First Samuel repeatedly shows the disappointment of those who trust in externals. Israel trusted in the symbol of God's presence—the ark—and not in God Himself, so they were utterly defeated (4:3–11). The nation trusted in a tall, impressive-looking king, so they got a foolish leader who brought hardship to his own people (14:24). Saul trusted in outward ritual, so God rejected him as king (13:8–14). But God showed favor to those devoted to Him from the heart. Hannah appeared barren, but through her God raised up Samuel (1:19–20).

Jonathan appeared powerless, but God used him to slaughter the Philistines (14:6–23). David appeared unimportant, but God chose him to be king (16:7–11).

However, appearance was everything to Goliath, Saul, and their armies. Goliath trusted in his own strength and defied Israel. No Israelite—not even their tall king who was supposed to fight their battles for them (8:20)—was brave enough to accept Goliath's challenge. Although Goliath had defied God by defying God's people (17:26), neither Saul nor Israel cared enough for God to risk their lives for His glory. Nor did they believe that God could use them to win the victory. They remained paralyzed by fear, overwhelmed by externals.

David was Jealous for God's Glory (17:12–30)

What David saw didn't scare him. It angered him. Goliath was just an uncircumcised man, godless. By defying and insulting the army of the living God, he was defying and insulting God Himself—not a dead, lifeless idol, but the living God who is alive and present with His people (17:26). This simple shepherd from Bethlehem was *jealous* for God's glory. He was so in love with God's honor that he became angry against those who dishonored God. What mattered to David was not Goliath's size but God's *glory*, God's *honor, greatness, and praise*. After all, God's glory is the reason for everything (Isa 43:7; Rom 1:21–23; 9:17; 1 Cor 10:31).

David's older brother didn't see things as David did (1 Sam 17:28). Perhaps Eliab was still angry at having his little brother chosen over him (16:6–7), or maybe, like the rest of Israel, Eliab saw only the outside and misjudged David's heart. Either way, Eliab shows once again how radically different David was. We are tempted to see things like the world around us, according to human judgment and outward appearance, but we must instead see things from the perspective of God's glory. Our hearts must be

THINK ABOUT IT

Israel still hadn't learned what Hannah sang about years before (2:1–10)—that God shatters the mighty but strengthens the humble (2:4).



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so jealous for His glory that we cannot remain silent when His glory is at stake (2 Cor 5:9; 1 Pet 4:16).

David Prepared to Defend God's Glory (17:31–40)

Like Eliab, Saul also judged David by his appearance (1 Sam 17:33). Despite his health and good looks, David was not a trained warrior. But David did not back down. Instead, he gave his own king a lesson in *theology*, in *truth about God* (17:34–37). Pointing to his victories over lions and bears, David claimed that God had given these victories. He saw God at work, and gave God the credit. He trusted in God, believing that Goliath would be just like all the other wild animals. Some trust in chariots, or in big giants encased in armor, but we trust in our God (Ps 20:7; Ps 33:16–19; Ps 147:10–11).



THINK ABOUT IT

The battle is the LORD's (Deut 31:6; 20:1–4), and He fights for His glory (Josh 4:24).

Still consumed with externals, Saul offered David his armor (1 Sam 17:38). The king, who was supposed to fight Israel's battles, sent his armor-bearer in his place. While Saul acted

as armor-bearer, David played the part of king. In the end, David rejected Saul's armor and any outward appearance of the kingship. Instead, he armed himself like a shepherd (17:40), and as a shepherd, he went out to protect his people.

David Fought for God's Glory (17:41–58)

Goliath was offended by David's appearance. "Am I a dog?" he asked (17:43). Goliath then cursed David by his gods. The battle of David and Goliath was more than a battle between two men, or even two armies. It was a battle between two opposing worldviews. Is the LORD God, or are Goliath's gods the true gods? Goliath should have kept silent. When he spoke that curse, he announced his own defeat. Long ago the LORD announced that those who curse His people will be cursed (Gen 12:3).

Two truths motivated David's fearless attack. First, David was jealous for God's glory (1 Sam 17:45). He could not sit idly by while godless men trampled underfoot the name of God. He had to take action, despite the risk. His desire was that all men—Philistine and Israelite—would know that the LORD is God (17:46–47). Second, David trusted in God's power. He believed he would be victorious because the victory would be the LORD's, not his own (17:47). David fought for God's glory with confidence because he knew God also fights for His glory.

With a run and a whirl, David hurled the stone into Goliath's skull (17:48–49). Goliath died appropriately—death by stoning as a blasphemer of God's great name (Lev 24:16). The stone delivered the deadly blow, then as Goliath faded into death, David used Goliath's own sword to remove his head (1 Sam 17:50–51). Just as Hannah predicted, God gave strength to His anointed king (2:10).

Two things happen after the victory. First, Saul asked who David's father was in order to grant the reward (17:25, 55). So until now Saul did not know the family of one of his favorite servants. Saul's ineptitude again contrasts with David, a king after God's own heart.

Second, the story ends by repeating yet again David's hometown, Bethlehem (17:58). One thousand years later, another would be born in Bethlehem—another humble shepherd of God's people (Matt 2:6); another David jealous for the glory of the Father to the point of death (John 21:19); another King conquering invincible enemies in the power of God (Col 2:15; Luke 23:46). God saved Israel from the Philistines through David, and He delivers believers from death through Jesus (Rom 6:6–8). Why does He do this? In order that those He saves will go on to live by faith in God (2 Cor 5:7, 9) for the glory of God (1 Pet 2:9–11), just as David did.

THINK ABOUT IT
God always acts for the sake of His glory (Isa 48:11).



Lesson Outline

God's people live for His glory and depend on His strength.

AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE



1. Goliath spoke badly about God's glory (17:1–11).
2. David was angry because he loved God's glory (17:12–30).
3. David killed Goliath for God's glory (17:31–58).

AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE



1. Goliath attacked God's glory (17:1–11).

- Goliath and the Philistines invaded Judah (17:1–3).
- Goliath was a gigantic champion (17:4–7).
- Goliath defied and terrified Israel (17:8–11).

2. David was jealous for God's glory (17:12–30).

- David brought supplies to his brothers (17:12–22).

- David was angry because Goliath defied the living God (17:23–27).
- David was scolded by his brother Eliab (17:28–30).

3. David prepared to defend God's glory (17:31–40).

- To Saul, David seemed too young (17:31–32).
- David said the LORD would rescue him from Goliath (17:33–37).
- David took a staff, a sling, and five stones instead of Saul's armor (17:38–40).

4. David fought for God's glory (17:41–58).

- David said he would kill Goliath with God's help for God's glory (17:45–47).
- David killed Goliath and cut off his head (17:48–51).
- Israel defeated the Philistines (17:52–54).
- Saul asked who David's father was (17:55–58).



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

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Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

1. **Who was the big, scary giant?**
Goliath.
2. **How did Saul and Israel feel when they saw Goliath?**
They were very afraid.
3. **How did David feel when he heard Goliath?**
He was angry because Goliath was dishonoring God.
4. **What did David do to honor God?**
David fought Goliath and killed him with his sling and stone.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

1. **Why were Saul and Israel so afraid of Goliath?**
They were afraid because they focused only on Goliath's terrifying appearance.
2. **What was so bad about Goliath defying the army of Israel?**
By belittling the army of Israel, Goliath was also belittling the living God of Israel.
3. **What was different about the way David responded to Goliath?**
Instead of being afraid of Goliath's appearance, David was jealous for God's glory.
4. **Why did David expect to beat Goliath?**
David knew God had delivered him in the past. David expected God to do it again for the sake of His glory. God always acts for His glory.
5. **What does the arming scene show about David?**
It shows that David will be a true shepherd of his people, and Saul is not.
6. **After Goliath cursed David, what did David say?**
David said he came in the name of the LORD, and he would kill Goliath so that everyone would know that the LORD is the true God.
7. **Who actually won the victory that day?**
God did. David knew that the battle belonged to God. God is the one who fights for those who trust in Him.
8. **What town is mentioned at the end of the story?**
Bethlehem, David's home, is mentioned. Bethlehem was small and seemed unimportant, but it is important because Jesus, the Son of David, was born there.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

WORK GLOVES

Bring in a variety of gloves. Ask the children what purpose each type of glove is used for. Ask them if a glove can do work on its own. Explain that gloves are simply tools to accomplish work. On the outside, it looked as if David was doing the work, but he was merely a glove through which God could do His work. In today's lesson, children will see how David was used by God to defend His honor.

CONFLICT

Have you ever seen people arguing? Sometimes when people argue they call each other mean names or say bad things about each other's family. In today's lesson, we will learn about a giant man who was doing this to Israel. He was saying bad things about Israel and Israel's God. He did this to make Israel mad and cause them to send one of their soldiers out to fight him. But Israel was afraid of such a big man. Would anyone go out to defend Israel and the name of their God? Let's see what happens in today's story.



ILLUSTRATE

BATTLE ILLUSTRATED

Help make the lesson come alive by using visuals as you teach. Cut out a silhouette of a man (9 feet 9 inches tall) and tape it to the wall. Talk about the massive weight of Goliath's armor by bringing in plastic armor and then explaining how much Goliath's armor weighed. Use five quarter-size river rocks to illustrate David reaching down into the stream to pick up five smooth stones. Use an empty sling to illustrate David swinging his sling.

HONORING THE GOD'S NAME

Talk with the children about how they can honor God's name. Tell the children that we honor God with our hands by using them to help, not hurt, our siblings and friends. We honor God with our mouth when we say nice things, not mean things. We honor God with our eyes when we pay attention to our parents and teachers. And, finally, we honor God with our feet when we come to our parents as soon as they call.



APPLY

DAVID, SAUL, AND JONATHAN

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheet, craft sticks, tape, and crayons.

Directions: Pre-cut pictures from craft sheet. Have children color the pictures. Help them to tape the pictures to craft sticks.



David, Saul, and Jonathan
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1

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AGES 6–8



HONOR ASSAULTED

Discuss what it means to dishonor someone. Explain that to dishonor someone is to mock their abilities, character, or intellect. How would they feel if someone mocked their mom, dad, brother, or sister? It is likely that they would want to defend their family member by having that person take back what they said. In today's lesson, we will see how God's honor was assaulted by the Philistines' representative, Goliath. David realized that what Goliath was saying about God was not true and needed to be defended. David realized that it wasn't he who was defending God, but that God would use him as a tool to defend Himself.

DEFEATING A GIANT

Goliath was about as tall as a basketball hoop (9 feet 9 inches). He also had armor all over his body and enormous weapons. Bring in 15 pound weight and ask the children to imagine this on the end of a spear. Could they throw it? What about Goliath's scale armor? It weighed 125 pounds. Could they lift it off the ground? How could anyone defeat him? Yet God used a youth and a rock to defeat the giant, defending His honor and glory.



GOD'S EYES OR MAN'S EYES?

Bring in a pair of binoculars. Talk to the children about perspective—a point of view, or understanding an object's dimensions in relation to other things. Show what happens when you look at something through binoculars. It gets bigger. That is how the Israelites were looking at Goliath. But what happens when you look at the same object through the other end of the binoculars? It gets smaller. Israel saw Goliath as a threat, David saw Goliath as an opportunity to defend and display God's glory.

JIM ELLIOT

Jim Elliot was one of five missionaries killed while attempting to evangelize the Huaorani people of Ecuador. After making initial contact with the Huaorani, Elliot and his four companions—Ed McCully, Roger Youderian, Pete Fleming, and their pilot, Nate Saint—made plans to visit the Huaorani. However, their desire was never fulfilled. Sadly, a group of Huaorani warriors killed Elliot and his friends on January 8, 1956. Elliot's journal entry for October 28, 1949 reveals his singular devotion to God's glory: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."



DAVID AND GOLIATH

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheet, construction paper, brown yarn, tape, scissors, glue, and crayons.

Directions: Have children color and cut out pictures from craft sheet. Glue the pictures to a sheet of construction paper, as shown below. Tape a piece of brown yarn to the hand of David (as a sling shot) and the spear and sword to Goliath's hands.

David and Goliath
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

WHY?

It's important to ask ourselves why we do or say the things we do. This reveals the motivation behind our words and actions. Ask the children to think of 5 things they have said or done today. Then ask them to consider "why" they said or did each of these things. Was it for their glory, or God's? 1 Corinthians 10:31 says we are to do all things for the glory of God. In today's lesson we're going to see a man totally committed to speaking and serving for God's glory.

ERIC LIDDELL

At the 1924 Summer Olympics, Eric Liddell refused to race on Sunday and was forced to withdraw from the 100 meter race, his best event. However, he could still compete in the 400 meter race, and though it was far from his best event, he won the gold medal. Just before the race a trainer from the American team slipped a piece of paper into this hand with a quotation from 1 Samuel 2:30: "Those who honor me I will honor." In today's lesson, we will see another young man who chose to honor God.



ILLUSTRATE

SPUD WEBB

As 5'7" Spud Webb was the shortest ever contestant in the NBA Slam Dunk contest, yet he won the event in 1986. In this contest, Spud became the first person shorter than 5'8" to slam dunk in the NBA. He was known for not allowing his small stature limit what he wanted to do. David, like Spud Webb, would not let his appearance stand in the way of protecting the name of his Lord. David didn't focus on externals. Sure, Goliath was a giant and he was a youth, but David knew that God would be with him.

SO THAT NONE MAY BOAST

Ask the children why they think God used David to defeat Goliath? Remind the children that there wasn't much about David to draw attention. Sure, he was healthy and good-looking, but he was a youth and inexperienced in combat. He didn't even have the right equipment. God chose David because he was humble. This is the type of man or woman that God chooses to defend His honor. God uses the weak to shame the strong so that no man may boast in the presence of God (1 Cor 1:27, 29).



APPLY

JEALOUS FOR GOD'S GLORY

Most people are jealous for their own honor and glory. When they are mocked, they are quick to respond, defending the honor of their name. But how do most people respond when they hear someone take the Lord's name in vain? Does it bother them? Do they ask them to stop, or do they say nothing? Ask the children how they respond. Do they ask them to stop? Do they continue to hang out with these children, knowing that they do not honor and respect God? When David heard Goliath taunting God's people, he could hardly contain himself. He was quick to defend God's honor and gave all the glory to God for Israel's deliverance. God does not want us to throw stones at people who speak badly about Him, but what we say or don't say when God's name is dishonored reveals much about our devotion to God and His honor.