

Worship Material
Confident in God and ready for anything?
Material from Roots Bible Study
Sunday 23rd June

Begin with opening prayer

Creator God, you are big, and we are small:

help us to worship you.

Lord Jesus Christ, you are perfect, and we get things wrong:

help us to turn to you.

Holy Spirit, you are powerful, and we are weak:

help us to trust you.

Read 1 Samuel 17:(1a,4-11, 19-23),32-49

Bible notes

The confrontation between David and Goliath was about more than size. Alongside of his extraordinary height, Goliath wore thick bronze armour and carried a spear tipped with the latest technology, iron. This import from the Aegean civilisation further west gave him a huge advantage over the Israelites, whose weapons were made of softer bronze. All this weaponry misled Goliath into putting his trust in physical resources, whereas David's trust was in God.

The story contrasts Goliath's ferocity with David's inner strength. It differentiates David from his soldier brothers – he was sent only to provide them with supplies, not to fight (vv.17-18) – and emphasises that he was only a boy. Unlike the demoralised Israelite army, David was not overwhelmed by Goliath's appearance. His confidence earned a rebuke from his oldest brother, recalling Joseph's similar fraught relationship with his siblings. When Saul heard of him, he also took David's words as empty bluster (v.33).

David's reply to Saul demonstrates his physical courage – he had confronted lions and bears, a comparison that dehumanises Goliath. More importantly, he had learnt that real power flows from dependence on God's strength and power to save. So, Saul, perhaps short on options for countering the fear Goliath was causing in his troops, was persuaded to risk his whole army (v.9) on a single combat between David and Goliath. However, Saul was not prepared to put his whole trust in God to defend David and Israel. The impractical suggestion that David should borrow his armour (v.38) shows that Saul was still focusing on human resources to overcome the enemy.

The combat began with the exchange of taunts. It is ironic that Goliath, whom David compared to lions and bears, likened himself to a stray dog. His threats against David depended on his false gods; in reply, David confidently asserted the power of Israel's God to destroy the enemy. They envisioned very different outcomes. Goliath spoke only of David's death and destruction (v.44). David foretold the loss of the whole Philistine army as a worldwide witness to the power of Israel's God. His attack with the slingshot amplified how God's power works: agile, audacious and precisely focused to achieve God's purposes.

Prayer

'Who is on the Lord's side, who will serve the king?'

David made careful provision for his flock and belongings;

as a boy he went out in your name and became a man of God.

We praise you that he was on the Lord's side, he served the king.

He shows us that we too can step up to the mark,

put our total trust in you and sally forth in your name.

'We are on the Lord's side,

Saviour we are thine.'

Amen.

A prayer to conclude

Great, powerful God, help us to trust you with the big things;

(throw arms out wide)

Great, loving God, help us to trust you with the little things;

(make a small shape with your fingers)

All-knowing God, help us to trust you with everything, always.

(make a large circle with your arms)

Amen.