

1 Samuel 17

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[0 : 00] So for anyone who is new to our studies, we are generally studying through the book of Matthew, but one Sunday in every four, I'm giving Ray a rest, and we're having a look through 1 Samuel currently. Prior to that we studied Ruth, prior to that we studied Judges.

So we will just keep going and see where we end up, I suppose. Book of Revelation, probably. And just to catch us back up, we've seen that it is a dark time for Israel. The time of the Judges was chaotic, and Samuel was the last judge whom God appointed to install a king.

And Saul was like the perfect choice of man. In chapter 9 we read that he was tall, imposing, valiant, young, handsome, brave, zealous.

And he inspires this pivotal victory over the Ammonites. And everyone's like, yeah, Saul's the man. But then we went on and read these rather conspicuous failures of Saul.

The most significant of which was his disobedience against God in failing to eliminate the Amalekites, as God had commanded. And so we read that Saul was rejected from being king.

[1 : 23] And then last time, Tony took us through chapter 16, and that was where we read Samuel go to Bethlehem, where he anointed the youngest son of Jesse.

And we read about him in the book of Ruth. The book of Ruth, among other things, establishes the line of Jesse and then David, his son. And we go from the most obvious choice, Saul, to the least obvious choice, David.

David is so trivial in Jesse's sight that he didn't even bother bringing him to the meet. He left him out with the sheep. Because obviously Eliab and all of these other strapping lads are what Samuel was looking for.

Having said that, we have also read that David is described at the end of chapter 16 as follows. And that's the assessment of David by one of Saul's young men.

And we read how David was anointed with oil by Samuel. And at that time, the spirit of the Lord rushed on David from then onwards. And then we actually saw the spirit leave Saul.

[2 : 49] And what happened was Saul was being tormented by this unclean or evil spirit. And we read that David was then brought into Saul's household to play to him the lyre or the zither or the harp or whatever you want to call it.

And then when he did that, it would bring him relief. So we should note that there is some ambiguity and conversation around the order of these things.

Are these events in chronological order? Because we've read that when David is anointed, we've read that he is the littlest. He's the one that it wasn't even worth bringing to the meet.

Then we read that he's brought in to be Saul's attendant, musician, and armor bearer, where he's described as valiant and mighty. And then he goes before Goliath in this chapter, where Saul describes him as a youth, ruddy and handsome.

And in the end, Saul's like, whose son are you, young man? And Abner would go and find out who his dad is, would you? So are these events in order? I honestly don't know.

[3 : 57] I mean, everything has been chronological up until now, so far as I can tell. But it is quite difficult to reconcile these things. One thing that is apparent is that the author for chapter 17 is drawing on a couple of different sources.

And it could be that there is some material that's not exactly in chronological order. So what? Who cares? How old is David, though? Well, I think anything from the ages of 13 up to 18 are possible for this event, depending on the order of things.

Because I don't think a 13-year-old could rightly be described as valiant and mighty. Well, maybe. And I'm not sure that an 18-year-old could be described as a ruddy youth.

But in that kind of a range. And one other thing I'll say before we get into two other things. The first of the two other things, I wanted to remind ourselves of who these Philistines are.

The Philistines are a people group that we frequently see as antagonists to Israel. They're descended from Egypt.

[5 : 10] The Man-Egypt, that is to say. From Genesis 10, you can read about that. And they are a people who dwelt near the Mediterranean coast of Israel. Now, analysis of the archaeological data and the historical records available, it leads to the view that they would trace back to the Aegean region.

That they settled in Crete for some time. And they may be Grecian in their roots. I.e. from Greece. Interesting speculation.

Who knows? The point for us today is that they are outside of the Abrahamic covenant. They are uncircumcised, which means outside of the covenant. They are idolatrous.

They worship foreign false gods. They are the enemies of God. But God has allowed them to remain in the land. Why? Well, as we read, and we've covered it specifically in the past, they've been left specifically by God.

Joshua did not clear them out to test Israel. To test Israel to see whether they would follow him by faith.

[6 : 21] And then the second piece of preamble, I will say, is that I want to give you where we're headed. Where are we headed? Well, we're going to be introduced to this dude, Goliath. He is a champion among the Philistines.

And what we're going to see is that he is presented to us as a picture of the serpent of Genesis chapter 3. He is coming against David, who is the forefather and type of Jesus Christ.

As in Genesis 3, David is going to crush the head of the serpent. So it is all a picture. And the key detail that I want for us to remember and to ponder on is that this is a single-handed victory of David, which is a victory for all of Israel.

And they enter into that victory and they move forward victorious against the enemy solely because of David's victory. It is all because of David.

Prior to David's victory, they were cowering, they were cowardly, they were feared, infearred.

However you conjugate that verb. They were afraid. And so this chapter is a picture of Christ Jesus defeating Satan by the cross, that once for all victory that we enter into by faith.

[7 : 40] And it's clear to me, and I hope to point out a few details that will help make that clear to you as well. Now, before we begin with the reading, I am reminded that I have failed to begin in prayer.

So let's take a moment to pray once again for the Lord's blessing on our study. Lord, we thank you for this opportunity to study your word. Lord, it's just awesome.

It's just awesome, Lord, to be able to read these words, Lord, that you inspired thousands of years ago. And you have preserved them miraculously for our edification and our learning today.

It's just amazing, Lord. There's nothing like it. And Lord, we have your Holy Spirit, Lord, as we've already prayed. So may your Spirit now come upon me. Lord, I don't want to say anything from my wisdom today.

Lord, I want to speak your truth. And I pray that only the things of you would remain in all of our hearts today. And may we all be instructed. May we all learn. May we all be encouraged today in this study.

[8 : 37] In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. So we're reading 1 Samuel chapter 17. I'll be reading from the 2020 edition of the NASB. Verse 1.

Now, the Philistines gathered their armies for battle. And they were gathered at Soko, which belongs to Judah. And they camped between Soko and Ezekiel in Ephes Damim.

I have taken a lovely little map from the ESV study Bible. So what can we see? Well, we can see Ezekiel and we can see Soko there next to Gath. We can see Bethlehem and Jerusalem over there on the right.

You can see Gibeah to the north, which is Saul's hometown, if you remember. That's where Saul lives. And you can see Gath over there to the west, which is where Goliath is from.

So scripturally, Soko and Ezekiel are described in Joshua 15. They are part of the lowlands of Judah, about six miles or so east of Gath for scale, six miles or so.

[9 : 42] Gath is one of the five Philistine capitals, as well, as I've said, as hometown of Goliath. So Gibeah there, where Saul lives, is 30 miles or so to the east, east-northeast.

It's actually quite rugged terrain. I googled the distance and it was kind enough to tell me it would be about half an hour by car. I'm like, yeah, that's not quite what I was looking for.

But yeah, it's quite rugged terrain. On foot, it would have been a significant march for Saul. So Saul and his army have come quite a bit further than the Philistines have out of Gath.

Ephes-damim is an interesting place. It means ceasing of blood or possibly ceasing of bloodshed. Unfortunately, this name appears only here in the scriptures, so I can tell you nothing else about it. Verse 2. Saul and the men of Israel were assembled and they camped in the valley of Elah. And they drew up in battle formation to confront the Philistines.

[10 : 51] The Philistines were standing on the mountain on one side, while Israel was standing on the mountain on the other side with the valley between them. And thus we get a bit of a picture of the terrain.

And the valley of Elah is today known as Wadi el Sant. I think that's in Arabic, Sant. Now, I wanted to give you a sense of the topology.

And I came across a video. And I will share the video with you afterwards. Although I will say that it's half an hour long.

And I haven't found half an hour free to watch the whole thing yet. So I am not sharing this with you with any sense of endorsement. See it only as a presentation of the topology. However, I think it is going to be quite awesome.

And if I ever get around to watching it, I have no doubt I will be super blessed by it. So, I just wanted to show you the valley of Elah, the topology. And the point is, we know where it is. We know what it looks like.

[11 : 48] Let's read on. Verse 4. Then a champion came forward from the army encampment of the Philistines, named Goliath from Gath. His height was six cubits and a span.

And he had a bronze helmet on his head. And he wore scale armour, which weighed 5,000 shekels of bronze. He also had bronze greaves on his legs. And a bronze sabre, or javelin, slung between his shoulders.

The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam. And the head of his spear weighed 600 shekels of iron. And his shield carrier walked in front of him. A champion, Hebrew, is a man of the space between, i.e. the space between two armies.

So what we're saying is, he's the guy who comes out to say, no one else needs to die. We can decide this right here, right now. Which was a common way of avoiding significant bloodshed between armies in antiquity.

The Hebrew name Goliath, Goliath, it's possibly linked to a verb meaning to carry away exiles, but it's not certain.

[12 : 59] What is very interesting, though, and you might notice this, you can be sensitive to this as we read through. His name only shows up in the chapter twice. And given how prominent he is, you would think we'd see it more than twice.

And it actually shows up only six times in the entire Bible. Most of the time, he's referred to as the Philistine. And in subsequent passages, he's referred to as the giant.

It's like the authors don't want to remember his name. His height is given as six cubits and a span, also known as 6.5 cubits, which in metric is nearly three meters tall.

So nine foot nine for our imperial friends, yes. Thanks, Sandy. Yeah. Yeah, tall guy. So what do we know about giants?

What do we know about biblical giants? So this is what we know about biblical giants. In Genesis 6, there is a group of individuals who are called the Nephilim.

[14 : 06] The Nephilim. And from a straightforward reading of Genesis chapter 6, it appears that they are of supernatural origin, which is to say that these sons of God, angels, took human women and through their offspring, produced these mighty men of renown.

Now Noah's flood, of course, would have wiped them out. But the chapter, Genesis 6, ominously notes that they were on the earth also afterward. And then we get to Numbers 13, which is when, if you remember the story, that's when the spies, the 12 spies of Israel, go to check out the promised land.

Let's see what's there. Giants. Is what's there. They are terrified by these sons of Anak, or Anakim, who are described as of the Nephilim.

And the spies say, we were like grasshoppers. We were like grasshoppers compared to them. And then as we read through the Torah, we also read of this guy named Og.

Og, the king of Bashan. And he had a bed that was nine cubits long, which is about four meters, some feet. I don't know. It was long.

[15:20] Now, does that mean that Og was that tall? No. My bed is a little bit taller than me, but not massively taller than me. So Og also was a giant. And so the Bible does have this history of tall, most likely of supernatural origin characters.

Now, however, the text does not say that Goliath is of or descended from the Nephilim. It doesn't say that. Now, some have speculated, well, maybe he had a condition called agromegaly.

Acromegaly. I don't know how to say it. Which is similar to gigantism. Now, that is a condition that leads to an abnormal production of the growth hormone.

People get big. They don't stop growing. I mean, it does produce very tall people. But it also tends to blurry, reduce vision.

It tends to reduce muscle strength. It tends to reduce bone health. It tends to reduce energy levels.

Does it sound like a fierce warrior to you? It does not to me either.

[16:28] So for me, I'm like, error. That's not that. That just doesn't seem right to me. Now, also on the subject of giants, Deuteronomy adds some details for us as well.

Deuteronomy chapter 2. And I'm sorry I'm whizzing through this, but I'm already thinking we're going to run out of time. But I'll give you the... You can listen back. I'll give you some notes and you'll be able to look these references up yourself if you want.

Deuteronomy chapter 2 shows us that there was a group called the Rephaim. The Rephaim who were also great and they were as tall as the Anakim. And Og was one of those.

But again, notably, it doesn't say that they were of the Nephilim. It doesn't say that they were of supernatural origin. It just says that they were super tall people. And then the last thing that is noteworthy for our study this morning is that in 2 Samuel 21, we read about a brother and three sons of the giant, or the Rifa is the Hebrew, who lived in Gath.

Who could the giant be? It seems fairly straightforward deduction to see this as Goliath's brother and his three sons. And whom David and his men then finish off.

[17:44] But it's not definite, and there is a bit of a lack of clarity, but that's really all I can give you in terms of biblical background for giants. And what I hope it will do is show you that we can consider the size of Goliath and his warrior-ness as reasonable to believe.

Reasonable to believe. And the reason I point that out is because some Bibles say, oh, maybe he was only four cubits in a span, which is what the Septuagint Bible has. And that would make him about six foot five.

We don't need to do that for this to be creditable. Okay, I also should talk about his armour and his weapons that we've just read. Bronze is used widely.

Bronze is an alloy of copper and tin. We all knew that, didn't we? And it is stronger than pure copper. The problem with that is that tin is not easily to acquire in the Middle East.

You can't mine it there. It was mined in Europe and China. And so generally one had to trade for it. And therefore Goliath's weaponry with four items of bronze is expensive stuff.

[18:53] Expensive stuff. And then the spear's tip is measured in iron shekels, which I would therefore deduce is made of iron. And the Iron Age was beginning around this time.

This is around 1000 BC. The Iron Age sort of started to begin in the Middle East around 1200 to 1100 BC. So iron was easier to mine. It was available locally.

The problem is that you have to get the furnace a lot hotter if you want to smelt iron. Now, but one thing that is conspicuously missing here. There's nothing said about Goliath's sword.

And given that, as we read on, the sword is the weapon that David will use to chop off his head.

And the sword will show up later in scripture as an awesome weapon, a unique weapon that David wields.

And yet here it's completely missing from the narrative. Interesting. Now, Goliath is a picture of Satan. He's a picture of Satan.

[19:54] And there's several indicators for us. First, and perhaps most obviously, he is in the role of a single, extremely powerful adversary. He is the worst of the Philistine army.

And they are all the enemies of Israel. Okay. He is wearing scale armor. And the word for scale is only used here, referring to armor.

Everywhere else we see it, it's referring to scales on a serpent or on a fish. So it is meant to conjure in the reader's mind an image of serpents or fish.

So you can think of Goliath as one clothed in scales like a serpent. That's the image we are to conjure. And then we read this word bronze. Helmet, the armor, the greaves, the javelin or the short sword or the saber.

Now, bronze is the word nechoshet. And it is very, very close. The same root to the word for serpent, nechash. And you may remember the story in Numbers 21, where Moses creates this bronze serpent.

[21 : 02] Nechoshet, nechash. And so again, for the readers here, who would be familiar with that story, they're thinking, bronze, nechoshet, serpents.

And the fourth and final thing to point out is, we keep seeing this number six. How tall is he? Well, he's six cubits and a span.

How many pieces of armor does he have? Well, he has six. Helmet, armor, greaves, saber, spear and shield. Maybe that's why the sword was missed out, because it would have made it seven. He has six pieces that are listed.

How much does his spear weigh? Six hundred shekels. How many times does his name appear in the Bible? Six. Six. The number of man? Six. The number of deficiency or imperfection.

And of course, the number of the beast we know from Revelation? Six, six, six. So all of this are hints for us to see Goliath, to read this description and go, picture of Satan.

[22 : 00] Let's read on to verse eight. He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel and said to them, Why do you come out to draw up in battle formation? Am I not a Philistine?

And you, the servants of Saul, choose a man as your representative and have him come down to me. If he is able to fight me and kill me, then we will become your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall become our servants and serve us.

Then the Philistine said, I have defied the ranks of Israel this day. Give me a man so that we may fight together. When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and very fearful.

So we talked a bit about that idea of representation already. So we see this defying of the ranks of Israel. And the word for defy, in most other places in your Bibles, it will be taunt.

And it carries the sense of casting blame or scorn. You're a bunch of cowardly losers. Your God can't save you. Your king can't save you. And the effect is just this dismay and great fear.

[23 : 14] And the word for dismay there at its root means broken. And as connotation then, secondary meanings are demoralisation and terror.

But it means just broken. Now, we're coming to verse 12. And I should point out to you that this is interesting in that verses 12 through 31 are missing from the Greek Septuagint Bible.

And there are some other missing texts as well. If you want to look into the whys and the wherefores, go ahead. I did. And then I stopped. I think I am satisfied that this is authentic, inspired Bible text.

And there is no reason to doubt it. Verse 12. Now, David was the son of the Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, the man whose name was Jesse.

And he had eight sons. And Jesse was old in the days of Saul, advanced in years among men. And three older sons of Jesse had followed Saul to the battle.

[24 : 17] And the names of his three sons who had gone into battle were Eliab the firstborn, and second to him Amminadab, and the third Shammah. So David was the youngest. Now, the three oldest followed Saul, but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's flock in Bethlehem.

And the Philistine came forward morning and evening and took his stand for forty days. So a couple of things we learn from this.

Jesse is an old man. Obviously, we were introduced to the family last time. So the only new information really is that Jesse is old. And that kind of reminded me of Joseph, you know, the son of his old age.

And there's another thing that we'll see to remind us of Joseph, which is the way he interacts with his brothers. So I think we're meant to remember Joseph in this narrative.

And the second thing we learn is that David is dividing his time between his shepherding duties and his royal duties with Saul. So again, we read that David had come into his household to be his resident musician, if you like.

[25 : 26] But he only needed to be there when Saul was being harassed by this evil spirit. So what David was doing is going between Gibeah and Bethlehem.

Now, I want to, at this point, remind us about Saul. So there's this forty days of taunting. And Saul really should step up.

In chapter 9 of 1 Samuel, verses 1 and 2, we read that there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, son of Zeror.

A valiant, mighty man, he had a son whose name was Saul. A young and handsome man. And there was not a more handsome man than he among the sons of Israel.

From his shoulders and up, he was taller than all of the people, than any of the people. This is Saul. He's the son of a valiant, mighty man. He is super tall.

[26 : 22] He is an imposing character. And why do the people want him? Chapter 8, verse 19. The people said, no, but there shall be a king over us, so that we may also, maybe like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.

Hey, job description, Saul. That's what they wanted. They wanted a champion. The problem is, their champion wasn't as good as Goliath, as the Philistines' champion.

And again, this is why, I think, Samuel mourned and said, God is your champion. God is your king. Of course, the thing is, when we put our trust and confidence in man, even if we've chosen a really, really good, capable person, there's always someone better.

Eventually, who will come along. We need our faith in Christ. So, 40 days. Where is he? I don't think it says, actually. I always envisage him in a tent up on the hill, sort of.

Maybe someone will do it. He's not stepping up. The Holy Spirit has left him. He's not walking with the Lord. And he's not equipped for the spiritual battle. Verse 17, then.

[27 : 35] Then Jesse said to his son David, Take now for your brothers an ephah of this roasted grain and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to your brothers.

Bring also these ten slices of cheese to the commander of their thousands, and look into the well-being of your brothers, and bring back confirmation from them. For Saul and they, and all the men of Israel, are in the valley of Elah, fighting the Philistines.

So David got up early in the morning and left the flock with the keeper, and took the supplies and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the entrenchment, encircling the camp, while the army was going out in battle formation, shouting the war cry.

So David has this commission to bring provisions to his brothers and to their commander. And I want you to note the diligence of David. You know, that small comment there that he left the flock with the keeper.

David had multiple duties. And he discharged them all faithfully. And it reminded me of our Lord Jesus, who is both shepherd and warrior, and he also, likewise, is perfect in all of his duties.

[28 : 46] Now the distance from Bethlehem to the valley of Elah, we saw it on the map, it's about 15 miles for him from there. And Jesse's like, run to the camp. There's a good lad.

15 miles. It's like, it's more than a half marathon over the hill country of Judea. So he gets up early in the morning. Very fit. Verse 21.

Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle formation, army against army. Then David left the baggage in the care of the baggage keeper and ran to the battle line. And he entered and greeted his brothers.

As he was speaking with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine from Gath, named Goliath, was coming up from the army of the Philistines. And he spoke these same words.

And David heard him. When all the men of Israel saw the man, they fled from him and were very fearful. And the men of Israel said, have you seen this man who is coming up? Surely he is coming up to defy Israel.

[29 : 45] And it will be that the king will make the man who kills him wealthy with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel. And David said to the men who were standing by him, what will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and rids Israel of this disgrace?

For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he is dead to defy the armies of the living God? The people answered him in agreement with this statement, saying, this is what will be done for the man who kills him.

So this is the first that David hears of what's been going on for these 40 days. And he overhears this conversation between the soldiers. You know, wealth and marriage to the king's daughter and tax-free in Israel.

High risk, high reward. But I want you to note that David is more focused on the honour of Israel and removing the disgrace. You know, the people see this giant...

Giant? They see a giant. And David sees an uncircumcised enemy of God. He's just another enemy of God. And God's bigger than Goliath.

[30 : 57] It's a matter of perspective, isn't it? And if you think back to chapter 14, where we read about Jonathan and he had this great victory. And he said this, he said in verse 6, Perhaps the Lord will work for us because the Lord is not limited to saving by many or by few.

You know, Jonathan, as did David, understood anybody plus God, always a majority. Verse 28. Now Eliab, his older brother, heard him when he spoke to the men. And Eliab's anger burned against David and he said, Why is it that you have come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness?

I myself know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart. For you have come down in order to see the battle. But David said, What have I done now? Was it not just a question? And he turned away from him to another and said the same thing.

And the people replied with the same words as before. And as I said, I think this little exchange between the brothers is meant to recall Joseph and his encounters with his older brothers as well.

[32 : 02] Eliab disdains the trivial responsibility, at least in his mind, is just your little flock of sheep. Who have you left them with? I'm here for the battle.

You should be with those few little sheep back in the field. You know, and I was thinking, Eliab is showing contempt for the day of small things. Zechariah 4.

You know, but, and as I pondered this, I thought, but Jesus would say to David, David, well done, good and faithful servant. You are faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. David was faithful with the sheep. And ultimately, God will put him in charge of Israel. Eliab, on the other hand, again, is a warrior of whom we could say, he's not stepping up.

He's not stepping up. He is a valiant warrior. He's the son of, did you notice we read it, that when Jesse was introduced, he's called the Ephrathite.

[33 : 01] As in, he's the Ephrathite. He is somebody. Jesse is a notable guy. Eliab is his firstborn. Eliab should have been an imposing, competent, capable warrior who is also not stepping up.

Oh, and also, remember, when Samuel saw Eliab, what did he say? Surely the Lord's anointed. And God has to say, I look on the heart. And what we see, I think, is Eliab talking down to David and scorning him because he's aware in his own heart of his own cowardice.

Verse 31. When the words that David spoke were heard, they informed Saul, and he sent for him. And David said to Saul, may no one's heart fail on account of him. Your servant will go and fight this Philistine.

But Saul said to David, you're not able to go up against this Philistine and fight him, for you are only a youth, while he has been a warrior since his youth. But David said to Saul, your servant was tending his father's sheep.

When a lion or a bear came and took a sheep from the flock, I went out after it and attacked it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. And when it rose up against me, I grabbed it by its mane and struck it and killed it.

[34 : 10] Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God. And David said, the Lord who saved me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear, he will save me from the hand of this Philistine.

So Saul said to David, go and may the Lord be with you. So again, we see the perspective of David here. Everybody else is looking on Goliath and seeing massive giants.

David just sees somebody who next to God is trivial. Trivial. Just another Philistine, just another enemy of God.

A God who is not limited to save by many or few. But we also see that David has faced trials and challenges. Facing the lion and the bear, probably at the time, was pretty terrifying. But it has been good training for this day, and David has learned to trust God through the trials. Verse 38. Then Saul clothed David with his military attire and put a bronze helmet on his head and outfitted him with armour.

[35 : 29] And David strapped on his sword over his military attire and struggled at walking, for he had not trained with the armour. And David said to Saul, I cannot go with these, I've not trained with them.

And David took them off. Now the bronze helmet, I think, recalls Goliath's. And I found myself thinking, you know, the armour here that David puts off, it's worldly armour.

It's the world's resources. Because Saul is a worldly king. And Saul's attempt to clothe David in his own gear. Well, actually, it does show us, I think, that David must have been somewhat close to Saul's stature and size.

I'm sure that it was adjustable to some degree. But Saul was the tallest in his community. So I think David can't have been this little guy. But in any case, for David, who was not used to wearing armour, it would have been an encumbrance.

The world does provide a lot of resources and services that can be a great help with the problems that we face. But when the battle is spiritual, they are bankrupt when it comes to really solving our problems.

[36 : 43] This reminded me of Hebrews 12.1, which urges us to lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us. And let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

So verse 40 now. So then he, David, took his staff in his hand and chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook. And put them in the shepherd's bag, which he had, that is, in his shepherd's pouch.

And his sling was in his hand and he approached the Philistine. So David takes not the things of the world, he takes the things of the shepherd. Now why did David take five stones when it will be evident that one was enough?

Speculation abounds, of course. I think useful things to note. Philistines had five principal cities, of which Gath was one. And I wonder if David was ready for all five of those cities.

Were they to produce other champions? And of course I alluded to 1 Samuel 21, where we read about the brother and three sons of Goliath. That makes five. So you could read this as David was well prepared.

[37 : 51] David had done his research, let's say. But the other possibility is contingency. Just in case he misses. You know, he had no...

I don't know that he was assured that he would strike first time. Who knows? Anyway, it's time for the battle. Who's going to win? Verse 41.

Then the Philistine came and approached David with the shield bearer in front of him. When the Philistine looked and saw David, he was contemptuous of him, for he was only a youth and reddish with a handsome appearance.

So the Philistine said to David, am I a dog that you come at me with sticks? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. The Philistine also said to David, come to me and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the wild animals.

So they approached one another and Goliath seems to be offended that Israel would send such an unlikely figure to face him. And he curses David by his gods.

[38 : 56] And I think that is supposed to refer us back to Genesis where Abraham is told by God, I will bless those who bless you and those who curse you, I will curse.

Verse 45. But David said to the Philistine, you come to me with a sword, a spear and a sabre. Possibly a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of armies, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

This day the Lord will hand you over to me and I will strike you and remove your head from you. Then I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel and that this entire assembly may know that the Lord does not save by sword or by spear, for the battle is the Lord's and he will hand you over to us.

David comes in the name of Yahweh of hosts or Tsevaot. Well, and he is the God of Israel's army, which is a different word, Ma'arachot.

So there's two different words for army here. Why is that important? Well, I think, just as we read in Psalm 89 this morning, that this is talking about the heavenly army of God.

[40 : 12] The Lord of hosts or the Lord of armies is the heavenly army, the angelic army. And, you know, so we read here, David understands he has a right perspective of God.

Military technology is nothing next to God. The battle belongs to him. But David also gives us the why of the victory. David is 100% confident in the victory and here is why.

But this is the bit that kind of blew my mind as we read Psalm 89. Because that psalm, Psalm 89 by Ethan the Ezraite, who was most likely an old man at the time of Solomon and therefore a contemporary of David.

Ethan had this vision or this prophecy about David. And we've, you know, if you're listening back to the sermon, go ahead and read verses 19 through 37.

Because in that prophecy, we read that David is anointed, past tense, and there's a word that's given that God will protect him, strengthen him. The enemy will not deceive him or afflict him.

[41 : 20] I will crush his adversaries before him. Now, so there's been this vision, this prophecy. And when was it written? And I just found myself speculating that this must have happened like very, very close.

It must have been around this time. Did David know about this? Did David know about the prophecy? I wonder if perhaps he did. Another thing that's worth observing, though, is also Acts 2.30.

In Acts 2.30, it is declared unequivocally that David was a prophet, to whom God had sworn to place one of his sons on the throne, exactly as prophesied in the psalm.

So by then I was thinking, hmm, I wonder if Psalm 89 is that prophecy, is that vision, and all of that connects together. So, I think it may well be.

David is confident that the Lord has told him, I will go before you, I will strike enemies, and I will see your son on the throne. And then David observes also another reason why here.

[42 : 26] So that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and so that this entire assembly gathered may know the battle is the Lord's. David foresees that this event, this contest, is going to be pivotal and a testimony to the whole world that Israel has God as their king.

Amazing stuff. Verse 48. Then it happens, when the Philistine came closer to meet David, that David ran quickly towards the battle line to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand into his bag and took from it a stone and slung it.

And it struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone penetrated his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground. Oof. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and the stone.

And he struck the Philistine and killed him. And there was no sword in David's hand. So the one weak point then for Goliath's armor, it didn't adequately protect his head.

He didn't have a helmet, as we know. So presumably it only came down to his brow, and it was right between the eyes. Nice shot. Lucky shot? No. No. It is the Lord's doing, of course.

[43 : 41] But also it's reasonable to think that David was an expert with a sling. We might think of the weaponry being crude. But in Judges 20, we read about these 100 men from Benjamin who could sling a stone at a hare.

And that's not a rabbit. Hare. That's a hare hare. And not miss. So being an expert and being a crack shot with a sling was possible.

And it's very reasonable to think that David was such a one. Verse 51. And then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and finished him and cut off his head with it.

When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. Then the men of Israel and Judah rose up and shouted, and they pursued the Philistines as far as the valley and to the gates of Ekron.

And the Philistine dead lay along the way to Shaarim, even to Gath and Ekron. And then the sons of Israel returned from their close pursuit of the Philistines, and they plundered their camps.

[44 : 49] And David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem and put the weapons in his tent. It's kind of grim. So we read that the stone and the sling were enough to kill Goliath.

And then David drew the sword to behead him. And we read it again to kill him, interestingly. And I think the best understanding is that the sling killed him. He was down, dead.

But what the sword and the beheading did is it gave proof and evidence. Yeah, he is dead. He's really dead. He's dead, dead. The sword of Goliath.

We don't know how heavy it was. We don't know what it was made of. Again, because it was conspicuously absent from the description. But David is able to pick it up.

And subsequently, in chapter 21, David is able to take it as his sword. So David was strong, or it just wasn't as huge of a broad sword as we might think.

[45 : 48] And the root of that route is on the video that we watched. You can watch it in your own time if you like. We're up as far as verse 55 in the homestretch.

Now when Saul had seen David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, Abner, whose son is this young man? Abner said, by your life, O king, I do not know.

And the king said, you then, ask whose son this youth is. So when David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the Philistine's head in his hand.

Gross. Then Saul said to him, whose son are you, young man? David answered, I am the son of your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite. Wow.

So again, this passage here where Saul seems to be ignorant as to who David is, missing from the ancient Septuagint, but I would confidently assert that it's authentic text.

[46 : 49] So how is it possible that Saul and Abner don't know who David is when he has been coming in and leading worship, so to speak? Well, it's simple.

Kings would have multiple armour bearers. So David isn't the armour bearer of Saul, he's just one. And secondly, he's not there all the time. We know that he was going to and from.

So David to Saul wasn't this super significant person at the time. He was just one of the many attendants of his court, doing his role fairly anonymously.

So that's the reason. Just to finish this off then, David is a picture of the son of David. David is described as attractive, but he does not have the appearance of one expected to be victorious.

David is the unexpected saviour for Israel. No one would have looked at David and thought, Ah, at last, someone is here to save us from this giant. And similarly, no one looked at Jesus.

[47 : 52] Very, very, very few people looked at Jesus and said the saviour is here. Obviously you've got John the Baptist, you've got Anna, and you've got Zechariah in the temple.

There are some people who had this supernatural insight, but mostly Jesus was carpenter from Bethlehem, from Nazareth. And he was not expected to be Messiah.

Humble beginnings. Secondly, David wields the tools of a shepherd rather than a warrior, even as Jesus Christ is our good shepherd. David models trust and faith in God in extremely difficult circumstances.

Christ, of course, goes even further. However, he models trust and faith even unto death and bearing the full wrath for our sake. And we've seen Goliath, this scaly serpent, this unholy and unclean enemy of God in his uncircumcision.

And David defeats him. And there's no contest here. There's no like, ooh, who's going to win?

There's no cheering from the crowds to see who's going to win. It's just smack dead. No battle.

[48 : 57] And I think this is foreshadowing Christ's ultimate victory over Satan. There's going to be no contest. No one is going to be thinking, oh man, is Jesus going to be strong enough?

We read that Jesus destroys the beast with the breath of his mouth when he shows up. Gone. And then David takes this representative role.

David's victory is a victory for all Israel. Christ's victory over sin and death is for all who will simply believe in him. It's a great, great picture. We enter into his victory.

And finally, where we read that the best that man can offer, Saul, is utterly powerless, impotent.

David steps up and is effective to save.

And again, there is nothing that mankind can do to save themselves. We need the son of David. We need Jesus Christ. And Israel enters into this victory of David.

[50 : 02] But think, the Philistines, it's still a great army. If you think about it, their army has just been minus one soldier. The same army is on that hill. And yet suddenly, instead of cowering in their tents, they're like, rah!

And there's a rout. And how is that possible? Because they saw, they had their eyes on David. And I think we are encouraged to keep our eyes on the son of David, who has already soundly defeated

the most powerful enemy who is against us.

And so there may yet be other enemies. There are. We keep our eyes on the one who defeated their champion. And we rejoice in his victory. Let's pray. Father God, we thank you, Lord, for this. We thank you for David and his incredible victory. We thank you, Lord, for the son of David, in whom we have the victory. Lord, we praise you just for the confidence that we can have, that you have done it, that you have done great things, and that you have saved us forever. Hallelujah. We praise you in Jesus' name. Amen.