



THE STORY OF DAVID AND GOLIATH

(1 Samuel 17)

In the days when King Saul ruled Israel, the Israelites were at war with the Philistines, a powerful enemy. The two armies faced each other on opposite hills, with a valley between them. Every day, a giant Philistine warrior named Goliath would come forward to challenge the Israelites. Goliath was over nine feet tall, and his armor and weapons were mighty and terrifying. He carried a massive spear and wore a bronze helmet, a coat of scale armor, and bronze greaves on his legs. Goliath taunted the Israelites, daring them to send out a champion to fight him. But the Israelites were filled with fear, and no one dared to face him.

For forty days, Goliath issued his challenge, and the Israelites grew more and more afraid. Among the Israelites was a young shepherd named David. David was the youngest of eight sons of a man named Jesse from Bethlehem. His three oldest brothers were soldiers in Saul's army, but David stayed home to tend his father's sheep. One day, Jesse sent David to the battlefield to bring food to his brothers and check on their well-being.

When David arrived at the camp, he heard Goliath's challenge. Unlike the other Israelites, David was not afraid. He was shocked that this uncircumcised Philistine was defying the armies of the living God, and he wondered why no one had the courage to fight him. David's words were reported to King Saul, who sent for him.

David told Saul that he would fight Goliath. Saul was surprised, as David was just a young shepherd, but David explained that he had fought and killed lions and bears while protecting his sheep. He believed that God, who had delivered him from the paws of lions and bears, would also deliver him from Goliath. Saul agreed to let David fight the giant and offered him his armor, but it was too heavy and cumbersome for David, so he chose not to wear it.

Instead, David took his staff, selected five smooth stones from a stream, and placed them in his shepherd's bag. With his sling in hand, he approached Goliath. When Goliath saw David, he was insulted that such a young, unarmed boy would come to fight him. He mocked David, cursing him by his gods and threatening to feed his flesh to the birds and wild animals.

But David was not afraid. He boldly replied, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. And the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel."

As Goliath moved closer to attack, David ran toward him. He reached into his bag, took out a stone, and slung it at Goliath. The stone struck Goliath in the forehead, sinking deep into his skull, and the giant fell face down to the ground. David had triumphed over Goliath with just a sling and a stone, without a sword in his hand.

David ran to Goliath, took the giant's own sword, and cut off his head. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they turned and ran. The Israelites gave a great shout and pursued the Philistines, defeating them and plundering their camp.

The story of David and Goliath is more than just a tale of a young shepherd defeating a giant warrior. It is a testament to the power of faith and trust in God. David's courage came not from his own strength but from his unwavering belief that God was with him. His victory reminds us that no matter how insurmountable our challenges may seem, with God's help, we can overcome them.