

David's Battle Against Goliath



The story of the battle between David and Goliath is one of the best-known tales in the Bible. It shows that it is not always the stronger who wins, but often the one who has courage, faith and stands up for what is right. Anyone who would like to know more can read the story in 1 Samuel, chapter 17.

The situation: Israel at war with the Philistines

The people of Israel were at war with the Philistines. The two armies faced each other in a valley: the Israelites were encamped on one side, the Philistines on the other. The atmosphere was tense, as neither side dared to launch the decisive attack.

Every morning and every evening, a mighty warrior would step out of the Philistine camp: Goliath of Gath. He was a giant of a man and an experienced fighter. The Bible describes his impressive armour: he wore a bronze helmet and heavy armour. A shield-bearer walked ahead of him. His spear was enormous.

Goliath stood before the army of Israel and shouted: 'Choose a man to come down to me! If he defeats and kills me, we will be your servants; but if I defeat him, you will be our servants.'

Day after day, Goliath challenged the Israelites. Yet no one dared to face him. The soldiers of Israel were afraid.

David was not yet a soldier at that time. He was the youngest son of Jesse and usually tended his father's sheep. His three older brothers served in King Saul's army.

One day, Jesse sent David to the camp to bring his brothers some food and to ask after their well-being. When David arrived there, he heard Goliath mocking the army of Israel. David was astonished that no one was standing up to this man. To him, it was not just a single soldier who had been insulted, but the whole people of God.

He asked, 'Who is this Philistine, this uncircumcised man, that he should dare to mock the ranks of the living God?'

The other soldiers told him of the reward that would be given to whoever defeated Goliath: wealth, the king's daughter and a special position among the people.

But for David, it was not about any reward. He saw a task. While others hesitated, David made a decision. He stepped forward and accepted the challenge.

David trusts in God

When King Saul heard of this, he had David brought before him. Saul could scarcely believe that a young shepherd would want to fight such an experienced warrior.

David explained: Your servant has already slain a lion and a bear. This Philistine will fare no better, for he has mocked the ranks of the living God.'

David recounted how God had already helped him when he defended his sheep against wild animals.

Saul wanted to give David his own armour. But David could barely move in it. He was not used to heavy weapons. So he took the armour off again and took only what he was familiar with: his shepherd's staff, his sling, and five smooth stones from the stream.

The encounter with Goliath

When Goliath saw David, he was horrified and felt insulted. He had expected an experienced warrior – yet standing before him was only a young shepherd.

He mocked David: 'Am I a dog, that you come at me with a staff?'

Goliath cursed David and threatened him with death. But David was not intimidated. He replied, 'You come against me with sword, spear and scimitar; but I come against you in the name of the LORD of Hosts.'

David knew that his strength lay not in weapons or armour, but in his trust in God.

The Battle

Goliath advanced towards David. David ran towards him, took a stone from his pouch, placed it in his sling and hurled it with all his might.

The stone struck Goliath on the forehead. The mighty warrior fell to the ground. David had no armour of his own and no sword. He eventually took Goliath's own sword and defeated him once and for all.

When the Philistines saw that their strongest fighter had fallen, they fled. The Israelites took heart and were able to drive the enemy back.

The Message of the Story

The story of David and Goliath is more than just a tale of a brave boy and a strong warrior.

It shows that:

- Courage does not mean being without fear. David surely feared the danger before him, but his trust in God was greater than his fear.
- True strength comes from within. Goliath had size, weapons and experience. David had faith, determination and trust.

- Everyone can fulfil an important role. David was young and inexperienced. Yet he was needed.

Lessons for Military Personnel

A mission requires not only skill and equipment, but also the right attitude.

David demonstrates:

- Responsibility: He does not wait for others to act.
- Courage: He takes on a difficult task.
- Trust: He does not rely solely on his own strength, but places his confidence in God.
- Determination: He remains true to his mission.
- Humility: He knows that his strength does not come from himself alone.

David shows that even someone who seems insignificant can achieve great things if they act with courage, trust in God, determination and a clear sense of purpose.