

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 17 (April 17-23, 2016)

We will continue to study the early years of David's life in this week's devotions.

Sunday, April 17 (read 1 Samuel 17:32-37)

"The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." (1 Samuel 17:37a)

David's God is larger than Goliath, so the young man of faith volunteers to do the impossible task (v. 32). King Saul, who is much larger and more experienced than David, does not have David's faith in the unseen God, so he sees only the giant. He certainly cannot believe that this young lad standing before him could possibly be victorious over such a formidable foe (v. 33). David, however, recalls the other times in his life when God allowed him to overcome impossible odds to defeat lions and bears, so he has confidence that the same God will win the victory over Goliath (v. 34-37). Can you recall past victories that came at the very last moment when you thought your faith was about to be overcome? Use these, as David did, to give you courage to face that giant staring at you today!

Monday, April 18 (read 1 Samuel 17:38-40)

David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them. "I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off. (1 Samuel 17:39)

I find it humorous that Saul, who is afraid to face the giant, insists on telling David how to fight him (v. 38). If he is too scared to put on his armor and to go out and fight Goliath, why does he think that David has to do it his way? How many times are we guilty of doing the same thing in the church? We allow younger people to do jobs that we do not want to do, and then we criticize the way they do them! David knows how to use only a slingshot as a weapon against his enemies, so he chooses five smooth stones from a nearby stream (v. 39-40). He understands the truth found in Zechariah 4:6b: "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," says the Lord Almighty." Similarly, I cannot effectively use the King James Version in my ministry. God has allowed me to have a "sword" (see Hebrews 4:12) that fits nicely in my hand (NIV). Don't criticize others because they cannot use **your** chosen weapon, but rather allow them to fight the giants in their lives using the method God has given to them.

Tuesday, April 19 (read 1 Samuel 17:41-44)

Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. (1 Samuel 17:41)

What impossible task are you facing today? Is that giant in your life coming closer and closer? Does he have someone marching in front of him to protect him from your weapon and to break down your defenses (v. 41)? Has he looked at you in disdain (v. 42)? Is he ridiculing you and your God as he approaches (v. 43)? Is he confident that you do not have enough faith to stand toe to toe with him and to overcome him (v. 44)? If so, this story of David and Goliath is for you! Too many of us have read it to our kids, but have never applied it to our own situations. Allow the Lord to minister to your heart as we follow the plot in tomorrow's devotion.

Wednesday, April 20 (read 1 Samuel 17:45-47)

David said to the Philistine, "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." (1 Samuel 17:45)

As Christians, "We live by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). If David had chosen to walk by **sight**, he would see only a giant who is over nine feet tall, who is clad in full body armor with a bodyguard walking in front of him. Choosing, instead, to walk by **faith**, he sees only the glory his God will receive from the victory, as well as the spiritual revival among the soldiers who will witness the miracle (v. 46-47). Do you have confidence that your battles are really the Lord's battles? Can you approach them with confidence, because you have come to realize that He will never leave you or forsake you (see Hebrews 13:5)? If so, what/who is that giant you are facing today? Can you trust God to defeat him?

Thursday, April 21 (read 1 Samuel 17:48-51)

So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him. (1 Samuel 17:50)

Having rejected the sword and armor of Saul, David uses the only weapon at his disposal to take down the enemy before him (v. 48-50). He has picked up five smooth stones (v. 40), but he only needs one! Scholars say that Goliath has four brothers, so David is ready in case the whole family attacks him. At any rate, the young shepherd boy avoids the full body armor of Goliath and targets his unprotected forehead, knocking him unconscious (v. 49). The text doesn't say what the bodyguard does, but we know that David runs up to the fallen giant, picks up the huge sword, and cuts off his enemy's head (v. 51a). I am sure that the shield bearer runs off with the rest of the Philistines (v. 51b). Are you ready to watch your giants flee? Use the sword God has given you (see Hebrews 4:12) and advance against them!

Friday, April 22 (read 1 Samuel 17:52-58)

David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, and he put the Philistine's weapons in his own tent. (1 Samuel 17:54)

Apparently, the evil spirit that God has sent upon Saul has affected his mind, because he should already know the lad who has been playing the harp whenever the spirit plagues him (see 1 Samuel 15:14-23). In today's text, the reigning king has to be reintroduced to the future king (v. 55-58). Israel has won a great victory over her enemies, the Philistines (v. 51-53) and David has brought Goliath's head to Jerusalem and has placed the giant's weapons in his own tent. It is a time of celebration for the Jews, but not all of God's army will enjoy the victory. We will see how jealousy raises its ugly head in tomorrow's devotion.

Saturday, April 23 (1 Samuel 18:1-4)

After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. (1 Samuel 18:1)

The relationship described in today's text between David and Saul's son, Jonathan, is one of the most beautiful examples of male bonding found anywhere in Scripture. Unfortunately, some have distorted the meaning and claimed that the two young men had a homosexual relationship. David is going to need a true friend in the years ahead, so God uses Jonathan to fulfill that role (v. 1). Saul no longer allows David to be a part-time shepherd, so he unknowingly brings his successor into his kingdom (v. 2). Jonathan makes a covenant with the future king (v. 3) and showers David with some personal gifts indicating that the king's son is aware that his dear friend will someday rule the kingdom instead of himself (v. 4). All of this plays into the jealousy we will see from King Saul in next week's devotions.