

## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

### MONDAY

From out the camp of the Philistine army marched Goliath - their champion! Even his name makes the hair on our necks stand up! A cubit is about 15-18 inches so he was really tall. His armored coat weighed 125 pounds! He carried a huge spear with a 15-pound spearhead! The only thing 'normal' about his appearance was the shield that some ordinary soldier carried in front of him. It was probably just for show anyway.

Why would Goliath ever need a shield?

#### **I Samuel 17:4-7**

The general appearance of Goliath gets all the attention in these verses. Why? Because the author is making a point: that man looks on the outward appearance. And looking at Goliath's outside appearance was not so fun if you were part of the army camped on the opposite hill! It was unthinkable that anyone could even fight him much less actually defeat him! Here's the lesson: in our lives, we will meet obstacles about which we feel this same way: "I can't beat it. I can't resist it. I can't overcome it. All is lost. Why even try?" David's story is telling us otherwise.

### TUESDAY

Goliath not only looked dangerous, he sounded dangerous. He challenged the Israelite army to send out their biggest and strongest fighter to fight him. He said that whoever won (he or - chuckle chuckle - the Israelite challenger) would make the other side to be his servants. As soon as the Israelites heard his words, they began seeing their futures as servants to a Philistine lord. Saul was especially dismayed, probably because he was also the biggest and strongest guy in the land, and the last thing he wanted to do was fight Goliath!

#### **I Samuel 17:8-11**

How significant the leader is! By this time in the story, Saul has already shown his true colors and they're mostly shades of yellow. I wonder where Jonathan was though? Previously he had been undaunted, ready to take on the entire Philistine army. Lesson for today: the best and bravest of men are no more than what God makes them. Jonathan must sit back and allow God to use David in this situation. Why so? We don't know. The wind blows when and where it will. And so it is with the Spirit of God. This passage is not license for us to say, "Great, I'll let someone else fight the battle, or share Christ with this co-worker, or whatever." It is, instead, the impetus for us to attempt great things for God. To step up and challenge the foe.

### WEDNESDAY

David's father, Jesse, was one of the oldest men in Saul's kingdom. Of his eight sons, three were in the army: Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah. David, the youngest, divided his time, caring for the family sheep at home, and visiting with his brothers in the army. One day, his father told him to take some grain and bread to his brothers, and some cheese for their commander.

#### **I Samuel 17:12-19**

"When Two Worlds Merge" would be my title for this section. David's world was back

on the farm. Back in the boondocks. Back where a friend is a friend. His brothers' world was up at the front. Up with the action. Up where temptations range and godliness strays. David is about to move from one world to the next. Will he be able to do so?

### THURSDAY

David arrived in camp to find the armies squared off, ready to do battle. They were shouting at each other from their respective hilltops! David, excited to be at the scene of a battle, ran to the front where his brothers were. Just then, Goliath stepped forward and issued his challenge once again. The Israelite army semi-retreated in sheer terror.

#### **I Samuel 17:20-25**

The focus is on Goliath's bold challenge and the army's timid response. Goliath thought himself to be on course for glory and fame, but he was wrong. Dead wrong, as it turns out. And the army, once again, shows itself to be faster in REVERSE than FORWARD. It's a picture both those who know Him not, and those who know Him but trust Him not. But where is the one who both knows and trusts the Lord?

### FRIDAY

David was amazed to hear that the rewards promised were so great. He said that a soldier in the army of the living God would have no trouble with this heathen Philistine. But his oldest brother, Eliab, was angry at him for saying that. He told David to get back to sheep and stop talking that way. David moved away from where his brother was but, among other soldiers, continued to speak the same way.

#### **I Samuel 17:26-30**

David saw the problem differently than everyone else; they saw an unstoppable, unbeatable giant, but David saw an enemy challenging the unstoppable, unbeatable God! David does not speak here (or anywhere) of the size of Goliath, for with David, that was not the issue! The issue was the glory of God, and Goliath's attempt to take it from Him. But God is not about to let that happen.

### SATURDAY

David's comments seemed to have touched a nerve, and they circulated around the camp. Eventually, King Saul heard them and sent for David. Saul refused David's offer to fight Goliath saying that he was just a kid, but David told Saul that when a lion or bear attacks the sheep and carries one off, he pursues and kills the predator, and rescues the sheep. He assured the king that he would treat Goliath as if he were just another lion or bear. And that the Lord would surely deliver him.

#### **I Samuel 17:31-37**

David has good reason for believing that he can defeat Goliath. He applied the provision of God in his past, to the problems of the moment. And he spoke with lips of faith. "I believe He will deliver!" What do you believe God will do for you today? Will He keep you from evil? Will He keep you from deceit? Will He keep you from discouragement and dissatisfaction? Whatever it is, we must trust Him to keep us from it.