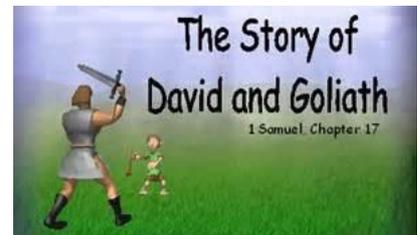




David and Goliath

(1 Samuel 17:1-58)



This is an 'all time great' story of the 'Biggest' fighting the 'Smallest'.

You can hear it almost every day, here in Australia on the radio as various groups of people: 'This is a David and Goliath battle' about sportsmen playing a game of soccer, football, tennis or maybe cricket. AND 'the biggest does not always win the contest. Yes - it happens in politics too. The one who thinks one cannot lose - finds that the - little guy - wins the fight (election). It is all very entertaining and you can never be sure who will win.

In the Bible story, a boy about maybe 15 or 16 years old kills a huge man - three metres tall - a giant! How did it happen?

Well, several years before, God had told Samuel the Priest to "Go and anoint the person I tell you to, be the future king of Israel." It was Jesse's son - David. David, who from just a teenager was very great in God's sight did not fully understand why he was anointed by Samuel as the future king. He did make some serious errors and mistakes in his long life - but God knew that he had a good heart and watched over him.



As a lad (boy) David looked after his fathers' sheep. If a lion or a bear came to take a sheep David would drive it away - or kill it with his trusty *slingshot*. (v.34-37)

A slingshot *can be a fearsome weapon but takes much practise to be very good. They can be seen on the WWW.*

At around 16 years of age David saw Goliath - the giant. The **Philistines** were at war with **Israel** and each morning for over a month, the Philistine army would line up on one side of a valley - with the army of Israel on the other side of the valley. The giant Goliath would stand out and shout abuse at Israel and mock (say rude things about God) and issue a challenge to Israel: "If any of your soldiers can beat me (kill me) the Philistines will surrender & be slaves to Israel. But if I kill your soldier - then all Israel shall be our slaves."

No Israeli soldier would fight Goliath because he was so huge - three metres tall! *Would you? (Remember: this is 3,000 years ago and none of our modern weapons).* But David could, and he did.

After Goliath had again yelled abuse at the Israelites, swore at David and blasphemed his God ... David delivered a little speech. In that speech he told Goliath that: "You come at me with a sword and spear - and you have mocked the God of Israel. I come at you with the help of the God of Israel and maker of heaven and earth. You will not feed my body to the vultures - I will kill you, I will cut off your head and feed you to the vultures." *(If this sounds gruesome and horrible just remember that today a person in an aeroplane can press a button ... and many people are killed or injured by the bomb he sets off.)*

Then David, the teenager, ran towards Goliath, took a stone that he had collected from a stream - it would have been rounded and smooth and about 400-500 grams in weight. He put the stone in his slingshot and hurled it at the giant and it would have travelled at about 90 to 100 km/hr - like a fast bowler in a cricket match - and it hit Goliath in the forehead. (The Bible says the stone sunk into the giant's forehead.) Goliath fell face down to the ground. David had no sword, so he ran over and used Goliath's sword to cut off his head.



Now Goliath had said that the Philistines would be slaves to Israel if Goliath was the loser and got killed.

But, no! The Philistines panicked and ran! So the Israeli soldiers raised a mighty cheer and began chasing them and killing all the Philistines.

A Bible joke: "Why did the stone that David slung at Goliath sink into his forehead?" There was nothing much to stop it. (No brains).

Please note: I have sometimes seen on the nightly news on the TV, young rioting kids using slingshots to hurl stones at Israeli soldiers. A powerful weapon indeed.

And I also wonder if David was left handed! Why? Well I have noticed as I get older - that many top ranking sportsmen were, or are, left handed. And world leaders too. On TV I have noticed that quite a few Government men, sign important papers, and agreements, with their left hand. Have they got something 'Extra' that right handed people do not? I think they have.

And in the Bible there is an account of a battle that Israel had with her own people. (one tribe against another) In this army were 700 left-handed experts who could sling a rock at target the size of a hair and hit it every time. (Judges 20:16 CEV)

So with practice you can get very good at anything: music, football, tennis, cycling etc.

So it was no problem for David to hit Goliath in the forehead. (God helps us - but we must do all we can too.)

*David was also a skilful harp player.
He wrote many of the songs recorded
in the book of Psalms in the Bible.*

