

David and Goliath

(1 Samuel 17:1-52)

Pre-Session Warm Up

Have you ever faced a big, huge problem? What are some problems children your age face? (Getting teased; having lots of homework at school; facing a test at school; nobody likes me; being bullied at school; parents fighting; mean friend; new in school or neighborhood, scared of big dog in neighborhood, etc.) Our problems can seem like giants in our lives, can't they?

Today in our Bible story, we'll learn about a big, mean, ugly giant named Goliath and how a little boy trusted God for the power to overcome him.

Opening Prayer

Father, so often the problems we face in life are like great big, mean, ugly giants. Teach us this morning that we can face the giants in our lives because You give us Your power and strength. Teach us to trust that You will always be with us as we face our fears. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

*The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him.
(Psalm 28:7 NASB)*

Lesson

Last week we learned that because King Saul was disobedient, God decided to remove him and appoint another king for the people of Israel. God told Samuel to appoint David, a young shepherd boy, as the king. But because David was still only a boy, it would be years before he actually takes the throne from Saul.

Meanwhile, the Philistines caused many problems for Israel.

We pick up the story today at a time when the Philistines and the Israelites were getting ready to fight each other. King Saul and the army of Israel were camped on a mountain on one side of a valley and the Philistines were camped on the other side of the valley. Nobody had started fighting yet. Instead of coming out with their spears and swords, the Philistine army sent their secret weapon. What do you think it was?

It was a man named Goliath. He was more than nine feet tall! He had a bronze helmet and armor that weighted two hundred pounds. He carried a thick sword and a twenty-five pound iron spearhead. And to protect him even more, a man walked ahead of him with a huge shield.

Goliath was big, mean, and ugly. Every day for 40 days the giant strutted before the people and shouted in a mighty voice, challenging the Israelites to send a man out to fight him one-on-one.

1 Samuel 17:10

I defy the armies of Israel today! Send me a man who will fight me!"

No one could stop Goliath! King Saul and his soldiers didn't seem to have a chance against Goliath and his mighty army. Has anyone every threatened you? Is there a bully at your school? [Teacher, let the children respond.]

King Saul and the Israelite army did not have courage. They were terrified by the threats of the giant Goliath. No one wanted to fight with him. They were all too scared.

1 Samuel 17:24

As soon as the Israelite army saw him, they began to run away in fright.

Then one day David's father sent him out to bring some food and supplies to the Israeli army. David listened as Goliath dared the Israelites to fight him and this made David furious.

1 Samuel 17:32

“Don’t worry about this Philistine,” David told Saul. “I’ll go fight him!”

David said that he’d go out and fight Goliath! But he was only a young shepherd boy; not a soldier.

1 Samuel 17:33

“Don’t be ridiculous!” Saul replied. “There’s no way you can fight this Philistine and possibly win! You’re only a boy, and he’s been a man of war since his youth.”

King Saul thought it was ridiculous that a boy would want to fight a giant like Goliath. But David wasn’t afraid!

1 Samuel 17:34-36

But David persisted. “I have been taking care of my father’s sheep and goats,” he said. “When a lion or a bear comes to steal a lamb from the flock, I go after it with a club and rescue the lamb from its mouth. If the animal turns on me, I catch it by the jaw and club it to death. I have done this to both lions and bears, and I’ll do it to this pagan Philistine, too, for he has defied the armies of the living God!”

What do you think gave David confidence to fight Goliath?

1 Samuel 17:37

The LORD who rescued me from the claws of the lion and the bear will rescue me from this Philistine!” Saul finally consented. “All right, go ahead,” he said. “And may the LORD be with you!”

Saul gave David his own sword and armor to wear, but they were too big for David and besides, he was not used to wearing armor, so he left them behind. Instead he went to a nearby stream and chose five smooth stones and put them in his pouch. Then with his sling in his hand, he walked toward Goliath.

1 Samuel 17:41-42

Goliath walked out toward David with his shield bearer ahead of him, sneering in contempt at this ruddy-faced boy.

Goliath looked down on David and snorted at him. What a bully!

1 Samuel 17:44

“Come over here, and I’ll give your flesh to the birds and wild animals!” Goliath yelled.

Goliath thought he could get away with his proud attitude against the armies of the living God, but God gave David supernatural boldness.

1 Samuel 17:45-47

David replied to the Philistine, “You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of Heaven’s Armies—the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. Today the LORD will conquer you, and I will kill you and cut off your head. And then I will give the dead bodies of your men to the birds and wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel! And everyone assembled here will know that the LORD rescues his people, but not with sword and spear. This is the LORD’s battle, and he will give you to us!”

David ran to meet Goliath. Taking a stone from his pouch, he fit it into his sling, whipped it around his head and let go. Whap! The stone hit Goliath squarely between his eyes and he fell to the ground!

When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they dropped everything and ran away as fast as they could go.

The Israelites shouted for joy! God had delivered them from the fierce Philistine.

Why was David so bold? Not because he had the strength in himself to have victory over Goliath, but because he knew and trusted his God. God had delivered him many times out of very difficult situations. David knew that he could trust God completely in this situation. God gave David courage.

What about you? Do you have any giants in your life? (Refer to Pre-Lesson Warmup.) When we have a problem, we can remember the words of Psalm 28:7 to help us remember we can face the giants in our lives because we can trust God to give us His power and strength.

God is all-powerful and he loves you very much. You can count on Him completely. God is our strength and shield. That means that He protects us and helps us in times of trouble. We love the Lord and are glad for all the good things He does for us.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You that You are our strength and shield. Thank You that You are always with us, protecting and caring for us. We love you Lord. Help us to remember that because of who You are, we can trust You totally. Thank You for giving us the courage we need to face the giants in our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

On butcher paper sketch a nine-foot Goliath. Let the children color it; then tape it to the wall so they can get an idea of just how big he was. As they work talk about how sometimes our problems seem as big as Goliath, but God gives us courage to face them.

Allow the children to write or draw pictures of the "giants" in their lives on sticky notes – things that scare them, make them sad, or problems that seem overwhelming.

Then let the children throw bean bags at the giant and as they do they can yell, "The battle is the Lord's!" If they hit Goliath in the head, they can remove one of the sticky note problems.

Game Center

Pantomiming the Story

Invite volunteers to take turns pantomiming the actions of people in the Bible Story (Goliath shouting, the Israelites shaking in fear, David putting on Saul's armor, David choosing stones from the stream, David using his slingshot, and Goliath falling). Other children guess the actions.

Note: you can combine the games by having a child pantomime a story action and whoever guesses the story action correctly gets to throw a bean bag at Goliath and remove a problem sticky note.

Pantomiming the Memory Verse

Invite volunteers to pantomime words from Psalm 28:7 (for "strength," flex arm muscles; for "shield," pretend to hide behind a shield; for "heart," make heart shape with hands; for "helped," hold out hands.) Other Children guess the actions.

Review Question Game

Divide kids into 2 teams.

For a correctly answered question the child gets a chance to toss a bean bag to a Target. If they get a bull's eye their team gets 1000 points. Next ring out is 500 points and 100 points for outside ring.

If they get a bull's eye, they also get to pull a "Problem" sticky note off of Goliath.

Or, use the following questions in another game of your choice:

1. How did the Israelite army feel when they saw Goliath? What did they do? (They were scared and ran away.)

2. What did David do when he heard about Goliath? (David said that he'd go out and fight Goliath.)
3. Why wasn't David afraid to face Goliath? (David had confidence in God. He knew that God was with him.)
4. What are some problems children your age face? (Friends who tease them; lots of homework; failed a test; nobody likes me; bully at school; parents fighting; angry with a friend; new in school or neighborhood.)
5. What makes you feel afraid? Or Sad? (Parents fighting; big mean dogs.)
6. When someone faces a problem, what are some things he or she can do? (Ask a parent or teacher for help in knowing what to do. Pray to God. Talk to a friend. Apologize to that person you are having the fight with.)
7. What can we remember when we have a problem? (Ask God for help. Trust in God for help.)
8. Why do you think it is good to talk to God about problems you face?
9. What are some ways God helps us when we have problems. (Gives us parents or teachers to help us know what the best thing to do is. Cares for us.)
10. What is today's Memory Verse? Psalm 28:7, "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him.")
11. What does this verse say about God? (He is our strength & shield.)
12. What does a shield do? (Protects a person) What are some ways God helps and protects us?

