

WEEK 27 • JULY 5, 2026

David and Goliath: Trusting God, Not Fear

SECTION 1 LESSON IDENTIFICATION

Week:	27
Date:	Sunday, July 5, 2026
Lesson Title:	David and Goliath: Trusting God, Not Fear
Primary Scripture:	1 Samuel 17
Supporting Scripture:	1 Samuel 17:45 to 47, Psalm 144:1
Memory Verse:	The battle is the LORD's. 1 Samuel 17:47

Bible Timeline Placement: Last week God anointed David through Samuel while David was still tending sheep. This week the same shepherd boy faces Israel's greatest threat, the Philistine champion Goliath. What David does here on the battlefield begins to confirm in public what God already knew in private. The victory sets the stage for David's growing reputation and Saul's growing jealousy in the chapters that follow.

SECTION 2 CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Valley of Elah. The armies camp on hills on opposite sides of a valley near Socoh and Azekah, a border region between Philistine and Israelite territory (1 Samuel 17:1 to 3). Neither army wants to attack downhill into the other, so the standoff stretches on for forty days.

Single champion combat. Goliath's challenge to send one man to fight him instead of a full battle was a known practice in the ancient world. A single duel could decide the outcome and spare both sides heavy losses. It also let the strongest warrior represent and speak for his entire nation, which is exactly why David's victory carries such weight for all of Israel.

Who the Philistines were. The Philistines were a powerful people settled along the coastal plain with advanced ironworking skill that gave them a military edge over Israel for generations. They appear throughout Judges and 1 Samuel as Israel's most persistent enemy on the western border.

Goliath's size and armor. The text describes Goliath at about nine feet tall, wearing bronze armor weighing roughly 125 pounds, with a spear point weighing about 15 pounds (1 Samuel 17:4 to 7). These details are not exaggeration for effect. They establish for the original audience that no ordinary soldier stood any real chance against him.

Saul's army was not a professional fighting force. Ancient Israel under Saul relied heavily on conscripted farmers and shepherds rather than a trained standing army. Their fear of Goliath was not weak faith in a vacuum. It was an understandable response to facing a trained giant warrior with citizen

soldiers (1 Samuel 17:11, 24).

David's errand. As the youngest son, David is sent by his father Jesse to carry food to his older brothers at the front and bring back news, a normal household task in that culture for the youngest member of a large family (1 Samuel 17:17 to 20). Eldest sons carried status and responsibility, while younger sons often ran errands like this one.

The sling was a real weapon, not a toy. Shepherds used slings to drive off and kill predators threatening their flocks. A skilled slinger could hurl a stone with enough force and accuracy to be lethal at a distance. Modern readers sometimes picture a child's toy. David's sling was a trusted tool he had likely used for years to protect sheep.

SECTION 3 WHAT HAPPENS IN THIS PASSAGE

Goliath steps into the valley every day for forty days, daring Israel to send a man to fight him. Every time, the entire Israelite army is terrified and no one answers the challenge (1 Samuel 17:1 to 11, 16).

Jesse sends David to the camp with food for his brothers and instructions to bring back word of how they are doing. David arrives just as Goliath is shouting his daily challenge and hears the fear in the camp firsthand (1 Samuel 17:12 to 24).

David asks why no one will fight for the reproach Goliath is bringing on the living God. His oldest brother Eliab accuses him of showing off and abandoning the sheep. Word reaches Saul, who sends for David (1 Samuel 17:25 to 31).

David volunteers, telling Saul that the Lord who delivered him from lions and bears while shepherding will deliver him from Goliath. Saul tries to dress David in his own armor, but it is too heavy and unfamiliar, so David sets it aside and takes only his staff, sling, and five stones (1 Samuel 17:32 to 40).

Goliath mocks David as a boy unworthy of the fight. David answers that he comes in the name of the LORD of Hosts, the God Goliath has defied, and declares that the whole earth will know Israel has a God. David runs at Goliath, slings a stone into his forehead, and Goliath falls. David then kills him with Goliath's own sword, and the Philistine army flees while Israel pursues them (1 Samuel 17:41 to 54).

SECTION 4 KEY THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS

1. About God: The Lord is the true warrior who fights for His people and wins battles His people cannot win on their own. David says it plainly: the battle belongs to the LORD, not to the strongest sword arm (1 Samuel 17:47).

2. About people: An entire army of God's own people froze in fear because they measured the danger by what they could see instead of trusting the God they could not see. Fear shrinks faith when our eyes are fixed only on the size of the threat (1 Samuel 17:11).

3. How this points to Jesus: An unlikely deliverer from Bethlehem goes out alone to fight a battle the trembling people could never win, and his victory becomes their victory. Centuries later another deliverer from Bethlehem would face the far greater giants of sin and death on behalf of people who could never defeat them on their own (1 Samuel 17:4, 49 to 50; compare Micah 5:2).

SECTION 5 GOSPEL CONNECTION

Israel needed a champion they did not have. No soldier in the camp was strong enough to face Goliath, so God sent one who was small in the world's eyes but anointed and trusted in the Lord. David's win was not really David's. It belonged to the God who sent him. In the same way, every person stands before an enemy far stronger than Goliath, the power of sin and death, and no amount of trying harder will defeat it. God sent His own Champion, born in that same town of Bethlehem, to fight that battle and win it for us. Jesus did not just help us fight. He fought in our place and won completely.

SIMPLE GOSPEL SENTENCE

Jesus is the Champion God sent to win the battle we could never win ourselves.

SECTION 6 QUESTIONS CHILDREN WILL ASK**1. Was Goliath really that big, like a giant in a story?**

Yes. The Bible describes his actual height and the weight of his armor, and it treats him as a real historical man, not a made up monster (1 Samuel 17:4 to 7).

2. Why didn't any of the grown up soldiers fight Goliath?

They were afraid, and fear made them forget that God had helped Israel win impossible battles before. Their fear was understandable, but David trusted God instead of just looking at the danger (1 Samuel 17:11, 24).

3. Wasn't it dangerous for David to use just a sling?

A sling was a real weapon shepherds trusted to protect their flocks, and David had used it for years. But David's real confidence was not in his aim. It was in the God he knew would fight for him (1 Samuel 17:37, 45 to 47).

4. Did David hate Goliath?

The Bible does not tell us David's feelings toward Goliath personally. David's anger was that Goliath insulted the living God in front of everyone, and he wanted God's name to be honored (1 Samuel 17:26, 45 to 46).

5. Why does God let scary people like Goliath exist?

God never promises a world with no danger or no enemies. What He promises is that He is with His people in the danger and that He will ultimately win. This story shows God using even a frightening moment to prove His power and His care (1 Samuel 17:46 to 47).

SECTION 7 TEACHER SUMMARY

Big Idea:	We do not have to live in fear, because the battle belongs to God, and God sends a champion to win it.
What God Did:	God sent an unlikely shepherd boy to defeat an enemy no one else could face, and gave the victory to His own name.
Points to Jesus:	David, the small deliverer from Bethlehem, foreshadows Jesus, the true Champion who defeated sin and death for us.
Error to Avoid:	Never teach be brave like David or face your giants. The child is one of the frightened Israelites who needed a champion, not David himself.
Hope to Emphasize:	The battle is the LORD's. Children can rest because God fights for His people and has already won the greatest battle through Jesus.

TEACHING GUARDRAIL FOR THIS PASSAGE

This is one of the most misused stories in children's ministry. Do not teach be brave like David or face your own giants. The child listening is not David in this account. The child is one of the trembling Israelites who needed someone else to win a battle they could not win themselves. David goes out and wins on behalf of the people, who then share in his victory without having fought it. Keep God as the hero and David as the one God sent. Point every retelling toward Jesus, the true Champion who fought and won the battle against sin and death that we could never have won on our own. The memory verse says it plainly: the battle is the LORD's.

SECTION 8 APPROVAL GATE

Teacher Background and Preparation Sheet complete.

Wait for approval before creating Step 2: Main Lesson, Activity and Discussion.