

## A BOY, A LION, A BEAR, AND A **BIG** MAN!

Presented by

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In 1 Samuel 17 in the Old Testament, there is a fascinating story about a boy, a lion, a bear, and a **BIG** man. God's people, the Israelites, often found themselves battling their enemies, the Philistines. On one occasion, the Bible says that "the Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them" (1 Samuel 17:3). Then something unusual happened. A man by the name of Goliath came out of the Philistine camp and challenged the Israelites to send a man from their army to fight him. He said, "Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants" (1 Samuel 17:9).

When King Saul and the Israelites heard Goliath's challenge, they were terribly afraid because Goliath was no ordinary man. The Bible says that his height was "six cubits and a span." Since a cubit was about a foot and a half, and a span was half a cubit, this means that Goliath would have been **almost ten feet tall!** Compared to the Israelites, he was literally a giant! And no soldier in the Israelite army wanted to fight a **giant!**

But on that particular day, a young boy by the name of David happened to be visiting his brothers, who were soldiers in the Israelite army. When David saw that none of the Israelite men would go out and fight Goliath, it made him so angry that **he** offered to fight the giant. King Saul told David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are a young man, and he has been a man of war from his youth" (1 Samuel 17:33). But David said to the king:

"Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth. And when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. Your servant has killed both a lion and a bear; and this Philistine will be like one of them, seeing that he has defied the armies of the living God. Moreover, the Lord, Who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will also deliver me from the hand of this Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:34-37).

So, King Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you." What amazing courage David had! What impressive bravery he possessed! And what great faith in God he displayed! Why was David, who was just a youngster, willing to fight a ten-foot-tall giant? David knew that in the past when he had fought and killed animals like lions and bears, he had been successful for one reason: **God was on his side.** And he knew that if he could fight fierce animals like those and win, then he could fight Goliath and win—**because God was on his side!**

You probably know how the story ended. David picked up five smooth stones from a nearby creek, and then went out to meet Goliath in battle. He put one of the stones in his slingshot, threw it at Goliath, hit him in the forehead, and killed him. The Bible says, “When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled” (1 Samuel 17:51). The young boy who bravely protected his **earthly** father’s sheep by killing lions and bears had now bravely protected his **heavenly** Father’s people by killing their enemy, Goliath.

Even against what seemed to be impossible odds, David refused to give up. His strong faith in God carried him on to victory after victory during his lifetime. When it comes to trusting God, this young man from so long ago has left us an example that we would all do well to follow. So, today when we face tough choices, when our faith grows weak, or when we need to defeat the “giant” known as Satan, let us remember to have the same attitude that David had when he said, “The Lord will deliver me.” After all, wasn’t it God Who said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you, so that with good courage you may say, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear’” (Hebrews 13:5-6)? Remember: **God is on our side!**