



# CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

NOVEMBER 18 2023

**Scripture Story:** 1 Samuel 16; 17.

**Commentary:** *Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapters 62 and 63.

## giant faith



Photo by The Crystal Lenz

### flashlight

“David, in the beauty and vigor of his young manhood, was preparing to take a high position with the noblest of the earth. His talents, as precious gifts from God, were employed to extol the glory of the divine Giver. . . . The love that moved him, the sorrows that beset him, the triumphs that attended him, were all themes for his active thought; and as he beheld the love of God in all the providences of his life, his heart throbbed with more fervent adoration and gratitude, his voice rang out in a richer melody, his harp was swept with more exultant joy; and the shepherd boy proceeded from strength to strength, from knowledge to knowledge; for the Spirit of the Lord was upon him” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 642).

### keytext

“David said to the Philistine, ‘You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.’ ”

(1 Samuel 17:45, NIV)

# what do you think?

If you took a test that measured how much faith you have in God, what grade do you think you would deserve? (Circle only one grade.)

**A      B      C      D      F**

If your friends graded the test, what grade do you think they would give you?

**A      B      C      D      F**

Rank the following Bible stories in order from the person who demonstrated the greatest faith (1) to the one who showed the least faith (10).

- \_\_\_ Noah and the ark
- \_\_\_ Daniel in the lions' den
- \_\_\_ Peter walking on the water
- \_\_\_ David slaying Goliath
- \_\_\_ Naaman dipping seven times in the Jordan River
- \_\_\_ Esther approaching the king to save her people
- \_\_\_ Moses leading the Israelites through the Red Sea
- \_\_\_ Rahab hiding the Israelite spies
- \_\_\_ Joseph refusing to compromise with Potiphar's wife
- \_\_\_ Abraham offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice

## did you know?

**G**oliath was a tall man—somewhere between 7 and 9 feet. The important thing to remember is that David with God on his side defeated Goliath and brought honor to God.

## INTO THE STORY

“The LORD said to Samuel, ‘How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.’ . . .

“Samuel did what the LORD said. . . .

“ . . . Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

“When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, ‘Surely the LORD’s anointed stands here before the LORD.’

“But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward

appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.’

“Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, ‘The LORD has not chosen these.’ So he asked Jesse, ‘Are these all the sons you have?’

“ ‘There is still the youngest,’ Jesse answered. ‘He is tending the sheep.’

“Samuel said, ‘Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.’

“So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.

“Then the LORD said, ‘Rise and anoint him; this is the one.’

“So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David.”

“Then [David] took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd’s bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached [Goliath] the Philistine. . . .

“David said to the Philistine, ‘You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hands, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head.’ . . .

“As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground.

## punch lines

“So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him.”

(1 Samuel 16:1, 4-7, 10-13; 17:40, 45, 46, 48-50, NIV)

## OUT OF THE STORY

The narrative of David and Goliath is perhaps the most well-known and beloved story in Scripture. Perhaps the timelessness of the story can be explained by the fact that it contains the essential elements of classic drama: the smaller and weaker prevails against the taller and stronger; one kid changes the destiny of nations; with God’s help, a humble boy triumphs against impossible odds.

Read the entire chapter of 1 Samuel 17 and *underline* any details of the story that are new to you. What jumps out at you that you haven’t noticed before? To what do you attribute the story’s timeless appeal to children? What do you think is the most important point of the story? How does the story apply to your life today?

What does the story teach us about the following topics:

Competition? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Purpose in life? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Talents and spiritual gifts? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Faith in God? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

“**The Lord himself** goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged” (Deuteronomy 31:8, NIV).

“**For everything that** was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope” (Romans 15:4, NIV).

“**Trust in the Lord** with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight” (Proverbs 3:5, 6, NIV).

“**I can do all this** through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13, NIV).

“**‘For I know the plans** I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’ ” (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV).

## further insight

**“It is not the capabilities you now possess or ever will have that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you. . . . He longs to have you reach after Him by faith. He longs to have you expect great things from Him. He longs to give you understanding in temporal as well as in spiritual matters.”**—Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 146.

# connectingtolife

## Sabbath

Read Proverbs 3:5, 6.

Share in your small group your reasons for ranking the Bible characters in the order that you did. Discuss these questions:

What other Bible stories come to mind when you think about death-defying faith?

Is there a modern-day equivalent to David? Do you know of anyone who demonstrated similar faith to the shepherd boy marching toward some giant obstacle with unflinching courage?

What would it take to build the kind of faith we read about in the Bible?

## Sunday

Read 1 Samuel 16 and 17.

Read the story of David's anointing as king and his encounter with Goliath.

The main text in the story of David's anointing is verse seven: "But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.'" (NIV).

The *NIV Life Application Bible* offers this commentary:

Saul was tall and handsome; he was an impressive-looking man. Samuel may have been trying to find someone who looked like Saul to be Israel's next king, but God warned him against judging by appearance alone. . . . Appearance doesn't reveal what people are really like or what their true value is.

Fortunately, God judges by faith and character, not appearances. And because only God can see on the inside, only He can accurately judge people. Most people spend hours each week maintaining their outward appearance, they should do even more to develop their inner character.<sup>1</sup>

From the selected verses in 1 Samuel 16 and 17 the character that has the most impressive outward appearance is clearly Goliath. Goliath appears from the camp of the Philistines as a "champion" (verse 4, NIV), using a rare Hebrew word that occurs only twice in the Hebrew Bible (1 Samuel 17:4, 23). The word translated "hero" in verse 51 is a more common Hebrew word. In the War Scroll discovered at Qumran, the word seems to mean "infantryman."

What can I do to value the true worth in others and not rely on outward appearances?

## Monday

Read 1 Samuel 17:45.

Personalize the *Key Text* to carry with you as a promise this week when you battle temptation. For example, your personal translation might be something like this: "Satan, you come to me through [pornographic internet sites], but I come to you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This battle belongs to the Lord."

## Tuesday

Read Romans 15:4.

Read the *Flashlight* section and then reflect on the following questions:

What is a love that moves you?

What are sorrows that beset you?

What are triumphs that attend you?

How can your answers to these questions become "themes for [your] active thought" so that your heart might throb "with more fervent adoration and gratitude" and your voice ring out in "a richer melody" so that you can live from strength to strength?

## Wednesday

Read the *Punch Lines* and pray about God's purpose in your life. What is God calling you to do?

## Thursday

Read Philippians 4:13.

Think about Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah. Chances are you don't even know who they are, right? They were three of David's brothers who paraded in front of Samuel in hopes of being anointed as king. These were the same brothers who were in Saul's army and listened to Goliath's taunts for 40 days, while cowering in fear. Because they allowed their fears to paralyze them, and not one of them had the kind of heart that David possessed, they have been forgotten while David's legacy lives on.

What risk is God asking you to take? How can you swallow your fears and step out in faith in order to be like David and do something great for God?

## Friday

Read Deuteronomy 31:8.

What qualities in David's heart does God want to develop in you?

<sup>1</sup> *NIV Life Application Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), p. 463.

## this week's reading\*

*Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapters 62 and 63.

\**Beginning of the End* is a special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at [www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#UR1hF1rB09s](http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#UR1hF1rB09s). By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.