

Part 20

• *David's rise to prominence*

1. David was interested in reward

• *Jesus certainly encourages us to go for heavenly reward*

2. David saw the same facts as everyone else but viewed them differently

• *We look at God's enemies and see they are outside of the help and power of God*

3. David went forward with a mixture of encouragement and discouragement

4. David uses spiritual logic

• *Saul does not seem to recognise David*

5. David started in faith and continues in faith

Before the incident with Goliath David was generally unknown. Suddenly something happens that introduces him to prominence.

1. **David was interested in reward.** 'What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine?' he asked¹. We may ask, are the servants of God to encourage themselves in God by the thought of how much they will get if they serve him? Is this selfish? But what would come to David would be a further opportunity for fulfil what he knew he had been anointed to do. God's rewards for service consist, amongst other things, of further opportunities to serve God. Jesus certainly encouraged us to go for heavenly reward and no-one can be more spiritual than Jesus². Actually the theme of reward is all over the Bible. Can it be wrong to want more of God, more opportunity to serve him, more occasions to be pleasing to him? David was interested in the next stage of his calling. Every Christian should be the same.

2. **David saw the same facts as everyone else but viewed them differently.** They all saw the same giant, heard the same thundering threats, yet David viewed them differently. This is what faith is. It is seeing the same facts as everyone else sees but viewing them differently. Everyone else thought Goliath could not possibly lose. David thought Goliath could not possibly win. The people and Saul react with fear. David reacts with indignation. 'Who is this uncircumcised Philistine...?'¹. They want to escape². David wants to go and get rid of this enemy of God. The Christian is a person who sees things differently from everyone else. We look at God's enemies and see they are outside of the help and power of God ('uncircumcised Philistines'), that they cannot win because they are defying God, and that anyone defying God is vulnerable to collapse.

3. **David went forward with a mixture of encouragement and discouragement.** He gets the encouragement of knowing what blessings will come if he goes forward in faith¹, but he also has discouragement from his own family² who criticise his purpose ('Why...?'), his sense of responsibility ('With whom did you leave the sheep?'), his character ('how conceited you are'), his innermost motives ('how wicked your heart'), and his seriousness ('you came down only to watch'). All of this was quite slanderous and he protests³ but does not occupy himself with criticism overmuch⁴.

4. **David uses spiritual logic.** In the providence of God the interest of David gets to the ears of Saul, and David is summoned¹. Saul does not seem to recognise his onetime armour-bearer. Maybe David has added a few years and a beard since they last met. David is confident²; Saul is sceptical³. But then David gives his reasons for confidence. It is spiritual logic. The God who has been with him before will be with him again⁴. David has known the help of God before. He uses an argument based upon his knowledge of God; it is this that gives him this assurance of faith. 'The LORD who delivered... will deliver...'⁵.

5. **David started in faith and continues in faith.** Saul thinks David might be right, and might just possibly win - but only if clothed with the proper equipment! He still has not got the point. David is not trusting in himself, although he expects God to use him. And he is not trusting in powerful weaponry. He is trusting that the gift God has

¹ 16:26a

² see Matthew 5:46; 6:1-18

¹ 17:26b
² 17:24

¹ 17:27
² 17:28

³ 17:29
⁴ 17:30

¹ 17:31

² 17:32
³ 17:33
⁴ 17:34-37a

⁵ compare 2 Corinthians 1:10

• *David goes out with his sling, trusting that God will be with him again as in his conflicts against the lion and bear*

6. His battle is a battle between worldly confidence and faith

• *Goliath expects to relish victory; David expects to relish God's name being better known*

• *David – a hero of faith*

• *David prefigures Jesus*

• *We too can be 'kings in Christ'*

given him and that God has used before, will be used by God again. He goes out to Goliath 'with deep conviction'^{¶1} that God is with him. Here is the fruit of his youthful years of fellowship with God. Saul's carnal thinking tempts him for a few moments^{¶2} but he soon realises he must not do things in Saul's way^{¶3}. He goes out with his sling, trusting that God will be with him again as he had been with David in his conflicts against the lion and bear. He takes his sling and stone, plus four spare stones^{¶4}. (I like the idea that he was ready for more champions; we know at least of Sippai, Lahmi, and another unnamed giant descendant of Rapha^{¶5}.)

6. His battle is a battle between worldly confidence and faith. Goliath is confident in his superior strength^{¶1}, despises David's apparent weakness^{¶2}, is scornful^{¶3}, religiously calls on unnamed gods^{¶4}, and is arrogantly assured of victory for no other reason than his self-confident assessment of his superiority^{¶5}. Where Goliath trusts weapons and strength, David trusts God^{¶6}. Goliath's gods are unnamed and gives Goliath no fellowship; David's God is named. He is Yahweh, the LORD, the God who has been known to defend his people^{¶6}. Goliath expects to relish victory; David expects to relish God's name being better known^{¶7}. Among Israelites and Philistines alike the character of God will get known^{¶8} and the method of God's working will be appreciated ('not by sword or spear'). David's faith and assurance is fulfilled. Goliath is knocked unconscious, and killed with his own sword. The Philistines are routed. Trophies of the war are carried off and eventually come to be housed in Jerusalem (which was not yet in Israelite hands), in David's tent.

The entire incident was a demonstration that David was what Israel needed, a hero of faith, a man who knew God. David has taken another step towards becoming king.

David also prefigures Jesus. We see Jesus in his people both before he came and after he came, and in David more than any other. Sin and Satan held us in bondage; Jesus was our conquering hero who slew our great enemy by his faith. As the Israelites rallied to faith because of the faith of David^{¶1}, so we 'live by the faith of Christ'^{¶2}.

And then we too can be 'kings' in Christ, slaughtering our Goliaths because we know our God and look at his enemies with the eye of faith.

¶1 see 1
Thessalonians 1:5

¶2 17:38-39a

¶3 17:39b

¶4 17:40

¶5 see 1
Chronicles 20:5-8

¶1 17:41

¶2 17:42

¶3 17:43a

¶4 17:43b

¶5 17:44

¶6 17:45

¶7 17:46

¶8 17:47

¶1 17:52

¶2 Galatians 2:20



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