



1

Saul's reign as King of Israel. 12:1-31:13

- David chosen and positioned to be the next king of Israel. 16:1-30:30
 - God provided David's encounter with Goliath to catapult David into a place of prominence in Israel. 17:1-58
 - The Philistines were the apparent aggressors as they came and camped in territory belonging to Judah, one of the tribes of Israel.

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 - Goliath
 - 9' 9" tall
 - Coat of mail weighing 125 pounds
 - Spear head weighed 15 pounds (an Olympic men's shotput is 16 pounds)
 - All his armament was bronze, the toughest metal of that day.

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- Goliath
 - Rather than the two armies engaging one another as usual, suddenly this imposing figure emerged to issue a challenge for a one-on-one contest that would determine which nation would serve the other.
 - The reaction of the Israelites was dismay and fear.

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 - Three of David's brothers had answered the callout to join the Israelite army.
- After a time, David's father, Jesse, sent David with provisions for the brothers and gifts for the commanders and charged David to bring back news concerning his sons.

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 - David was in Saul's service as seen in the last chapter but would go back and forth between Saul and his responsibilities to his family.
- David arrived just in time for the armies to array themselves opposite one another and again hear the taunts and challenges from Goliath.

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 - David was appalled that this pagan opponent was allowed to defy the armies of the living God. Note David's focus was the honor of God.
 - It seemed that the people were picking at David a bit by telling him what Saul was offering to the champion that would defeat this man.

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 - After 40 demoralizing days of fear and shame Eliab, David's older brother, lashed out at David for what he considered his rash, youthful talk about engaging Goliath.
 - It needs to be noted that Saul, who had been chosen and commissioned by God to fight Israel's enemies, had not stepped forward to fight Goliath.

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 - The possibility of someone, anyone, to fight Goliath, assured that David would be called before King Saul.
 - Saul, eager to pursue anyone else who would fight Goliath, sent for David when he heard of his interest.
 - David expressed his unreserved intention to engage Goliath.

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 - Saul, focused on the threat, pointed out to David the strength and skill of Goliath and the lack of experience and skill of David.
 - David, focused on Yahweh, revealed how God had given him the strength to defend his sheep from the lion and the bear and now would deliver him from the hand of Goliath as well.

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 - Saul offered and David tried wearing Saul's armor and wielding Saul's weapons but found them cumbersome.
 - David's approach to Goliath with his shepherd's staff and sling was taken as an insult and enraged Goliath. (The only clue to the number of stones (5) David picked from the stream is found in 2 Samuel 21:22 which may indicate there were four close relatives, possibility brothers of Goliath.)

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 - Goliath made clear what he intended to do to David, but David made clear to Goliath what Yahweh, the God He served, would accomplish for His honor and glory.
 - David's stone from his sling hit the only small vulnerable place on Goliath's body rendering him unconscious allowing David to kill Goliath with his own sword.

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 - This stunning event immediately turned the tables and emboldened the demoralized Israelites and put the Philistine army into a panic.
 - The Israelites attacked the retreating Philistine army all the way back to their fortified cities and came back and plundered their camp.

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 - Part of the prize to the one who defeated Goliath was to "make his father's house free in Israel" which is likely a reference to exemption from service to the king and perhaps any taxation.

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 - This explains the inquiry of Saul to Abner. Even though David was already in the service of Saul, Saul would not necessarily have known much about David's family.
 - When David returned bearing the head of Goliath, Saul inquired of him, and he revealed that he was the son of Jesse of Bethlehem.

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Lessons

- Saul's inaction here is a classic example of the strong biblical teaching that the fear of people and/or circumstances is paralyzing.
- David's action is a classic example of the empowering nature of a focus on God and His faithfulness.
