

## MAY 15

### 1 Samuel 17:1-18:4

#### 1 Samuel 17

Vs. 1-11 It is possible that four to five years have passed by since the last chapter. The boy, David, was no longer playing the harp for the king. Saul had serious matters with the Philistines to tend to.

V. 4 A cubit is about 18 inches, so a foot and a half. This would have made Goliath about nine and a half feet tall: almost as high as a basketball rim. The reading of four cubits would have made him only six feet tall. It should be remembered that the people back then were short by our standards. Even in Europe when you visit a castle and they show you a bed, your first reaction is that you're in the kid's room and then you find out the king slept in that bed. They obviously didn't have enough junk food back then. The people were usually in the range of four to five feet tall. Saul himself might have been six feet tall, head and shoulders above the others. Still, who'd be afraid of a six-foot-tall man? Would that be a giant? Goliath was clearly in another category. Nine and a half feet tall would stand out even today and he'd be making millions in the NBA.

Vs. 12-16 Remember that Jesse was the grandson of Boaz and Ruth. David would have been their great grandson. There is something interesting in this trivia. Under Moses, you couldn't fight unless you were twenty years old. Let's assume this was the same here. Of the eight sons of Jesse, David was the youngest, and then came four more brothers under twenty and then there were three brothers over twenty. This means that with four other brothers under twenty, David couldn't have been more than fifteen years old. This means that David would have been 10-11 when he was anointed by Samuel and played the harp for Saul. But, when he was anointed at 10, the Spirit rushed upon him and began making him bold, courageous and deadly. Even as a 10- or 11-year-old he was observed being fearless and deadly. And, the faith to follow the Lord was already there.

Vs. 17-23 This is setting the stage for David to be on the battle line. The particulars are interesting, but what catches my attention is the last sentence in this section, *And David heard him*. Remember how the Lord allowed Samson to be provoked and how the Spirit came upon him? That is what is happening here. The Spirit is getting David worked up.

Vs. 24-30 You can already sense the Spirit shaking David up, getting him ready for action. David asks at least three different people to verify what the reward was for killing Goliath. I think this is the adolescent in David coming out. I think it's cute to see his scared older brother go after him. These are very real and humorous family dynamics and David sasses him back.

Vs. 31-37 David may have been an adolescent, but his faith was full grown and energetic. In contrast to Samson, notice how David is jealous for the glory of the God of Israel. David had the Spirit with him, and God Himself had prepared David for this moment. I would imagine that once you got good at fighting quick aggressive animals like lions and bears, fighting this big guy would be like swatting one of those big dopey flies out of the air with a newspaper. For men like Caleb, and now David, giants were just big, slow moving targets.

For us as disciples, it is good to think about God's presence in our lives and how He might be preparing us for the future. He is definitely working in us now. I'm sure David had no clue how God was preparing him for this battle and the ones that would follow. All those years of being the youngest, getting the dirty jobs, having to live out in the fields with the sheep, protecting them against predators, were used to mold David into a fighter and a king.

Vs. 38-40 This is a small section with a huge lesson. The Lord who prepares us gives us the unique tools and weapons we need to do His work in the harvest.

Vs. 41-47 I was reading this morning about Jesus telling His disciples that in the hour we are dragged before councils to give testimony to Him, the Spirit will teach us in that hour what to say. This is David talking but fully inspired by the Spirit. Wow!

V. 42 This is the editor's note. I doubt that Goliath stood there thinking, "what a handsome little boy."

Vs. 48-49 Just like we've seen before, if we step out in faith, the working of the Lord is such that it points back to His guidance and grace. This is David's story, but as we follow in the harvest, God gives us our own stories of how He brings down giants and saves the seeking.

Vs. 50-54 As soon as Goliath fell, everything broke loose. David was able to draw Goliath's sword, finish him off and cut off his head; the Philistines ran and Israel pursued. Verse 54 is a summary sentence describing what happened later. First, there was a battle and ongoing fighting. In David taking the head to Jerusalem, it would have fired up the celebration and shown the people God's victory. In a way, that had been Saul's thinking in keeping Agag alive; but in that case, God had said that no one should be spared.

Vs. 55-58 Back to the Battle. After David killed Goliath and as the soldiers were chasing the Philistines, David was brought in to talk to Saul. Now, it could be that if years had passed and David had grown and looked different, you could understand Saul not recognizing David. If Saul had been self-absorbed in his dark mood, he wouldn't have remembered much of David. But notice that David's identity is never the question; it is his family. According to the promise to the killer of Goliath, David's family would be freed from having to fight in the army and this fifteen-year-old could marry Saul's daughter. (Saul's older daughter was in her twenties. I'll bet she was really happy about marrying a fifteen-year-old boy. David might have been excited, but I doubt she was happy. It didn't happen anyway. David eventually married Saul's younger daughter Michal.)

1 Samuel 18:1-4

One very significant part of this story is the way Jonathan embraced David. It was almost as if Jonathan recognized the Lord working in David and, in the Spirit, gave David his own claim to the throne. That is certainly how the Lord made it look, and Jonathan was a very spiritually perceptive man.

### **John 8:21-30**

Vs. 21-22 All of this hinged on them accepting that Jesus had come from the Father, from God. Then, they would have known where He would be going and would have been terrified that they couldn't go there too. It is fair to say that Jesus was being a little cryptic, but it is also true that the leaders asked none of the right questions. They showed that they wanted to fight Jesus, not understand Him.

Vs. 23-24 Verse 23 couldn't be clearer, unless your spirit was bent on not wanting to accept who Jesus said He was. Verse 24 is the only unforgiveable sin, to die in your sins without coming to Christ and receiving forgiveness.

Vs. 25-27 Again, this couldn't be a clearer declaration that Jesus was the Son come from the Father.

V. 28 This was Jesus saying that there would also be an opportunity after His crucifixion for them to know that He was the Son of God and the Messiah. In Acts, it says that many of the Pharisees came to Christ. One note here is that the words, *lifted up*, seem to be slang for crucifixion. Later in John 12 when Jesus says, *lifted up*, the crowd immediately understood that He meant crucifixion. That means here too, the people and Pharisees understood what He was saying when he used this expression.

V. 29 Humanly speaking, what gave Jesus the toughness to thrive in these situations is that He did what the Father wanted Him to do and, abiding in the Father, knew that the Father was always with Him.

V. 30 The truth and rationality of Jesus' Word was cutting through the darkness. This is why Jesus never stopped teaching, so that the last person would have a chance to understand and turn to Him. This is also why Paul told Timothy to preach the Word. It is one of those things we do in the harvest as the night approaches.

### **Psalm 111**

This is one of those anonymous psalms. Still, I hear the voice of David in here.

V. 1 The part of this psalm that speaks to me today is the first sentence, *I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation*. David felt that his obligation to the Lord for His grace and deliverance was to proclaim to everyone what God had done.

Vs. 2-9 You notice that in almost every verse there is a separate thing for which to praise God. Because we have read so much, we can almost pick out events in Israel's history as the writer names each thing. Notice that vs. 7-8 sound very much like Psalm 119. That is another clue that David might be the writer.

V. 10 This is an encouragement to the worshipers to submit to the Word and to pursue the Lord.

With all the things that press upon us, it seems like everything sinks its claws in us and takes a piece of us. Here it talks about giving thanks to the Lord with our whole hearts. I guess that means being so overwhelmed by His grace and goodness, that nothing gets a piece of us or steals our peace. Abiding in Christ and being His servant means that where He is, there is His servant also. If we are serving Christ and we're in a mess, there is still peace in the mess, because Jesus is there too.

### **Proverbs 15:11**

This is a good warning and a comfort if our hearts are submitted to the Lord.