

David and Goliath

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[0 : 00] is M&S;'s flagship big party cake. If you're having a birthday party, maybe this is the cake you turn to.

But it's so good and it's so popular that other supermarkets have their versions too. And one of them is Aldi's Cusper the Caterpillar.

And a year or so ago, the luxury M&S; one took the budget Aldi one to court because they were so similar to one another.

It felt like Cusper was a complete copy of Colin. And Aldi were potentially in great trouble.

And it was described in this article I found as a David and Goliath battle. The big guy, the main one, Colin, from M&S;, the posh supermarket, against little Cuthbert at the little Aldi shop.

[1 : 15] A David and Goliath encounter. And you may hear that phrase, a David and Goliath encounter, in other ways.

I was thinking about sport, when a little team takes on a big team. David and Goliath encounters. And this morning, we come to the original David and Goliath encounter. Little David against big, giant Goliath.

And perhaps this morning, as we come to this passage, a passage we know well, maybe you're thinking, well, Daniel's going to say we need to go in faith like David and slay our giants.

We need to be like David, the hero. But that's not where we're going to go this morning. I think when we read this carefully and when we read the Bible carefully, actually we should come to a different conclusion.

[2 : 28] Not to be like David, but to look to one who is like David. But even better. Who is David?

Well, we met him last week when he was anointed to be the new king of Israel. And this is after we have seen chapters of Saul, the current king, not acting as God would want him to.

Saul, the king of the Lord's people, failing to obey Israel's gods and following instead his own ways in his foolishness.

And so the Lord, sadly, rejected Saul and his line from being king.

We have a while to wait before Saul will stop being king. We've got many chapters left of 1 Samuel. We've got a while to wait before David becomes the new king.

[3 : 43] But I think this chapter here is helpful for us to see the difference between Saul, who wasn't being a very good king, and the new Lord's anointed king, David.

A king who, as we'll see, seems to have his heart set on following and obeying and trusting the Lord's.

But for now, David continues as a shepherd boy. And as we read the start of this chapter, he is not on the scene. He is not on the battlefield yet.

Who do we find on the battlefield where we kind of get the setting here in verses 1 to 3? The Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Sokoh in Judah.

They pitched camp at Ephes Damim between Sokoh and Azekah. Saul, the current king of Israel, and the Israelites assembled and camped in the valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines.

[4 : 57] The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another hill, and a valley is between them. The battle stage is set.

The Philistines versus the Israelites. And in this battle, we come across one giant enemy.

Sure, the enemy is the Philistines, but there's one who stands out in all this. Have a look at verse 4. A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp.

His height was six cubits and a span. He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze, weighing 5,000 shekels.

On his legs, he wore bronze greaves and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. His spear shaft was a reaver's rod and its iron point weighed 600 shekels.

[6 : 12] His shield bearer went in front of him. This is one huge enemy. He is three meters tall.

That is nearly 10 feet tall. I'm six foot, roughly. Four more feet above me. That is one huge enemy. He has strong armor weighing 58 kilograms. He's got a bronze javelin. He is armed and ready for a fight.

Big, strong, and terrifying. And he is standing ready to take on anybody who dares fight him.

Here is his threat to the Israelites in verse 8. Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, Why do you come up and line up for battle?

[7 : 15] Am I not a Philistine and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects.

But if I overcome and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us. Choose a man to fight me if you dare, Goliath is saying.

You won't win, but if you do, we'll serve you. Otherwise, you will come and serve us.

The thought of anybody going to fight such a huge giant of an enemy seems crazy.

There he is standing strong and mighty. As he says in verse 10, he is standing to defy the armies of Israel.

[8 : 27] That's what he's doing. He's standing in defiance towards them. That word is repeated throughout the chapter. So, for example, verse 23.

The Philistine champion from Gath stepped forward from his lines and shouted his usual defiance. Verse 25.

Now, the Israelites had been saying, do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. And in verse 26, towards the end, who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?

He's standing in defiance in terms of taunting and challenging them, saying, come on, fight me if you dare.

Come and take me on. I wonder how you would feel in the face of such a threat. Would you be confident?

[9 : 38] Yeah, go on. I'll take you on. Or maybe you'd feel a bit more like the Israelites, D. Verse 11.

How were they feeling? On hearing the Philistines' words, Saul and the Israelites, they were dismayed and terrified. And in verse 24.

Whenever the Israelites saw the man, they all fled from him in great fear. Understandably. Against such a huge man.

Giant man. Dismayed. Terrifying. Fleeing with fear from this enemy. Of course you would be.

This is a huge enemy. Will anybody come out and fight? Well, verse 16. Have a look there.

[10 : 36] For 40 days the Philistine came forward every morning and every evening and took his stance.

This huge giant coming forward. Standing strong. Who's going to take me on? Morning and evening for 40 days.

Day one, nobody. Day two, nobody. Day 10, still nobody will face him. Day 30, still nobody's facing him.

Still he shouts out this challenge. Come and fight me if you dare. Day 40. 40 days and 40 nights.

Morning and evening. It's a long, long time. And still no sign of anyone standing against him.

[11 : 40] Why would she? You've got no chance. And Christians this morning, we have an enemy that stands against us.

Day and night. An enemy that accuses us. That challenges us. That tempts us. Some of us were looking in 1 Peter a few months ago.

1 Peter chapter 5 verse 8. We read this verse. Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

We have an enemy. We have an enemy. Revelation 12 says he accuses us before God's throne day and night.

Goliath. Goliath is a picture of our enemy. Goliath is a picture of our enemy, Satan. Who is trying to bring us down so that we may be subject to him.

[12 : 54] And that's the enemy. And that's the enemy. That we face. And Goliath is a picture of that.

And we see him and his threats against God's people here in this chapter. He is a very real threat. Who will take him on? And for that, we need a champion, don't we? It's the second point.

The champion. And in many ways, the most unlikely person comes forth to fight.

Saul the king. It won't be him. The people wanted a king to fight their battles. He's not fighting this one.

[13 : 51] A member of the Israelite army, it's not them. Day and night, 40 days. Still none of them come forward and challenge. And so we go away from the battlefield and we go to a son and his father.

And in verse 17, we see them. Now Jesse said to his son David, Take this ether of roasted grain and take ten loaves of bread for your brothers and hurry to their camp.

Take along these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are doing and bring back some assurance from them. They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the valley of Elah fighting against the enemy.

David is given the sandwiches to take to his brothers. Cheese sandwiches. Good sandwiches. Here's the bread.

Here's the cheese. Hurry along. Feed your brothers and find out how are they doing. Jesse is a concerned father for his sons.

[15 : 04] Understandably so. They're at war. They're facing an enemy. And so David loads up and sets off as he's instructed. And in verse 22, we see this.

David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines, and asked his brothers how they were. Just as his father wanted them to. And as he was with them, he heard one of Goliath's daily challenges.

He saw the enemy that they were facing. And the men around David were chatting, and they said this in verse 25. Now the Israelites have been saying, Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage, and will exempt his family from taxes in Israel.

This is a rather attractive reward, isn't it, for a young man like David? If he challenges Goliath, he'll get a wife, and he'll get lots of money, and he'll never have to pay taxes.

[16 : 23] What a great prize is on offer. A bit like when you see a poster for a missing cat. Family can't find their cat.

They have a reward of 300 pounds or something for finding the cat, because the cat is important to them. And they can't find the cat on their own.

And victory against the enemy is important for Saul and the Israelites. It's important, but they can't do it on their own. Nobody's actually standing up and fighting.

And so there's a great prize on offer. And David takes interest in all this. It's explained to him the reward that's on offer.

But one of his brothers hears of David's interest in this. See his reaction, verse 28. He burns with anger.

[17 : 45] Why have you come to interfere? Sounds like something I might have said to my brother, my younger brother in the past, if he's trying to interfere with something. Go away.

That's what Eliab is saying here. Go away. Go back to your little sheep in your little field. This is for older brothers, not for you. But perhaps he's reacting like that because he's jealous that David seems interested in all this.

Maybe even interested in fighting. Eliab hasn't volunteered to. And I don't think he's going to. But David doesn't go back as Eliab requests.

He ignores his older brother. And actually, he goes and speaks to the king. And he says this in verse 32 to King Saul.

David said to Saul, Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine. Your servant will go and fight him.

[18 : 56] I'll go and fight. He says to Saul. I'll go. Don't lose heart. It's okay.

I'm your servant. I'll go and take on the enemy, Goliath. But Saul thinks David is out of his mind.

Verse 33. You're not able to go against this Philistine and fight him. You're only a young man. And he has been a warrior from his youth. And I think I agree with Saul.

David, you've had no fighting experience on the battlefield. And this is a huge enemy. And he's had many, many years of fighting. But David says, No, don't worry about it.

Based on this. Verse 34. Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it and struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth.

[19 : 57] When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair and struck it and killed it. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear. This uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them.

Because he has defied the armies of the living God. David says, Don't worry. I've been fighting for my sheep all these years.

All these bears and lions. I'll be okay against them. And you know what? I know I've been okay. Because of the Lord. Verse 37.

The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine. He knows that the Lord has been good to him.

The Lord has been protecting him. And the Lord will work and help him against this Philistine who stands against the armies of the living God.

[21 : 02] And so, in what I find a rather amusing encounter with Saul and David, they start trying on some armor.

Verse 38. Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around because he was not used to them.

Can you imagine? A little David with all this armor on, big, heavy stuff. And it doesn't really work, does it? And so David says, I cannot go in these.

He said to Saul, because I'm not used to them. But you're about to face a giant. You need protection. Back in June, early June, I spent five hours shopping for clothes I don't normally wear. For a suit for my wedding to Becky in July. And at several points, I think I could have said what David said here. I cannot go in these because I'm not used to them.

[22 : 07] But I went for it. Imagine, on the day of our wedding, I stand at the front of the church in my shorts and t-shirt while Becky comes down the aisle in a beautiful dress.

It would be silly. You'd think I'm mad. And I think David's mad. To say about the armor, I can't wear all this.

I just can't wear all this protection. So he just wears his shepherd's clothes. Surely he's a goner. No hope here.

And so it all seems rather quaint, doesn't it? And little. And a bit weak. Verse 40. Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the stream.

Put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag with his sling in his hand. And approached the Philistine. Five stones. Smooth stones.

[23 : 13] Sling. Shepherd's bag against a ginormous giant. Goliath. With his javelin. His big armor.

No chance. No chance. But Goliath sees. Goliath sees that. And well. He thinks the same.

No chance. Here. Verse 42. He looked over David and saw that he was little more than a boy.

Glowing with health and handsome. And he despised him.

He said to David. Am I a dog that you come at me with sticks? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. Come here. He said. And I'll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals.

Goliath thinks he's mad too. Come here. And I'll rip you to shreds. You'll be food for the birds and wild animals. And if I was David.

[24 : 15] I think I'd be thinking. What am I doing here? I could be in the fields with my sheep. But how does David respond? Well it's full of faith.

Verse 45. 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.

This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals. And the whole world will know there is a God in Israel.

All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves. For the battle is the Lord's. And he will give all of you into our hands.

[25 : 17] All the way through those few verses. David shows where his confidence is in. It's in the Lord. I come in the name of the Lord Almighty. Verse 45.

In verse 46. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands. The whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. Verse 47. It is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves.

The battle is the Lord's. David couldn't be clearer could he? As he faces this giant Goliath.

He faces him in the Lord's strength. Trusting the Lord will bring victory here to David and to his people. So the moment arrived.

David reaches into his bag. He takes out one of those smooth stones. And he sets it in the sling. He pulls back.

[26 : 22] And he fires. And the stone hits. This great big giant Goliath in the forehead. And it sinks in.

And he falls face down to the ground. That's what we read in verse 49. Let's check that that's the case. Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone.

He slung it and struck the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead and fell face down on the ground.

Now he may have fallen over but this is a big giant. Surely he could get himself up again. He's a big mighty warrior. Well not so.

Verse 50. So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone. Without a sword in his hand. And he struck down the Philistine and killed him.

[27 : 23] And he goes to make sure he's really dead by cutting off his head. And fun and slightly gross things happen with Goliath's head as you read on.

Through this little young man David with his little stone and his little sling. We find a champion. The Lord's anointed.

And he's got Goliath's head to prove it. And this is what the book of Samuel is kind of all about.

The Lord raises up the weak and the lowly. And brings down the proud and mighty.

I wonder if you remember Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2. It's a helpful prayer to have in mind as we read the rest of the book.

[28 : 27] So here's one verse in that prayer. The bows of the warriors are broken. But those who stumbled are armed with strength. It's Goliath.

He's a mighty warrior. But the Lord has broken him down. And stumbling shepherd boy David has been armed with strength.

Hannah continued in her prayer. It is not by strength that one prevails. Those who oppose the Lord will be broken. Goliath was there in all his strength.

Standing morning and evening. Shouting his defiance. And yet he did not prevail. He opposed the Lord and his people.

And he was broken. And finally the prayer ends. He will give strength to his king. And exalt the horn of his anointed.

[29 : 33] Which is remarkable. Because when Hannah prayed. There was no king in Israel. A king was quite far off at that point.

But now we have a king. King Saul. But a king who's been rejected. We have here David who we know has been anointed.

To be the new king. And we see God doing exactly what Hannah prayed. He will give strength to his king.

And exalt the horn of his anointed one. Our champion David is the Lord's anointed. And God has given strength to him.

And the story here then. Is not saying. Be like David.

[30 : 36] We are not the Lord's anointed king. Are we? And so I'm not going to tell us to go off and start slaying our giants.

Rather the passage is saying. Look to one who is like David. To the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord's anointed Messiah.

Like David. Like David. But better. For our enemy. As I said. He prowls around like a roaring lion.

Our enemy. He may use the powers. And the rulers of this world. Has been defeated. By this Lord's anointed.

The Lord Jesus Christ. And will be completely. And finally destroyed. By him. Sin. Death. Hell. And Satan. Have been.

[31 : 36] And are being destroyed. By Christ. Our mighty champion. Revelation 12. Verse 10.
John. John. Writing.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven. Say. Now. Have come. The salvation. And the power. And the kingdom of our God. And the authority of his Messiah.

For the accuser of our brothers and sisters. Who accuses them. Before our God. Day and night. Has been held down. Our enemy.

Like Goliath. Standing day and night. Accusing us. Challenging us. Taunting us. Will be held down. Victory.

Won. Jesus on the cross. To feed the powers and authorities. Including Satan. Who accuses us of wrongdoing.

[32 : 33] Before God's throne. Day and night. And Jesus. A bit like David did. In verse 32. When David said to Saul.

Let no one lose heart. On account of this Philistine. Your servant will go. And fight. Jesus says. In this world. You will have trouble. But take heart. I have overcome.

The world. He has won. The battle. As our champion. On the cross. And that's good news. For us to celebrate.

This morning. The Lord brought. Goliath down. Using little King David. And the Lord has brought. Victory over sin. Death. Hell. Satan. On the cross. As Jesus died.

[33 : 29] It looked weak. It looked small. The powers of death. And darkness. Probably thought. We're winning. But it was proved otherwise.

Wasn't it? As Jesus rose again. Confirming the great victory. He had won. And so he says to us. Take heart. I have overcome the world.

And so the devil may stand. Before us. Accusing us of wrongdoing. Saying you're not good enough. You're too sinful.

But we stand this morning. Knowing Christ's victory. Knowing that there is no condemnation. For those who are trusting.

In the Lord Jesus Christ. For salvation. And we as a church. This morning. Maybe we feel. A little bit small. And a little bit weak.

[34 : 30] But we this morning. We stand in Christ. And his power. And in his might. And so as I. Draw to a close. I want to read this quote. I've read this week.

A really helpful one. On this kind of theme. Every time. A local church. Like us. Made up of. Saved sinners. Gathers to celebrate the gospel. And goes out to proclaim the gospel.

God's unsearchable. And God's unstoppable victory. Is put on display. To the spiritual forces. Satan. Is reminded.

Of his defeat. Every time. Your church meets. The gospel reminds us. We are not the Lord's anointed. We're not like David.

We do not defeat the enemy. But the gospel reminds us. There is one king. Like David. But better. And his name is Jesus Christ.

[35 : 29] The Lord's anointed one. And we stand in his victory. This morning. And so every time. We as a church meet. Every time. We tell. Others of the gospel.

Satan is reminded. And should be quaking. Of the thought. Of his defeat. And so. He can roar. His threats.

He can prowl around. He may do some harm. But he cannot destroy. Those who are looking to Christ. As their mighty champion. So take heart.

Believer. For Christ. Has overcome. The world. Let's pray. Father God.

Thank you so much. For your words. Thank you for. This passage. Thank you that. It points us. So clearly.

[36 : 29] To the Lord Jesus Christ. Our mighty. Mighty champion. Who has won the victory. Over. Our enemy. And we pray. That you would help us. To keep. Looking to him. And his victory. In order to stand.

Strong. In this world. Was to take heart. For our saviour. Has overcome. The world. And Lord. We ask this.

In the name. Of our mighty saviour. Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. Amen. So we're going to. Sing together. Amen.