

## David: Highs and Lows

*David and Goliath*

1 Samuel 17

### Introduction:

When David showed up at the Valley of Elah with his care package delivery and heard Goliath's taunting curses he asked a question of the fearful fighting men standing around him, paralyzed with fear: "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (1 Samuel 17:26).

Get that – the *living* God. God was not a name given to some warm inward feeling of goodwill. God was not an abstraction or an idea. God was not an issue to be debated or defended. David knew God as *living* person. A being present in the world, doing things, and powerful above any other being that existed.

In his book *Leap Over A Wall*, Eugene Peterson rightly states that "God was the reality with which David had to do; giants didn't figure largely into David's understanding of the world, the real world." There in the valley of Elah David had a "God dominated imagination, not a Goliath dominated imagination."

As we reflect on the much-loved story of David and Goliath this week it will be tempting for us to think long and hard about the various giants we all face – tempting but not fruitful. You already know what your giants are. Some of them have probably been stomping around in your life for a long time. You're not likely confused about what you're facing that has you overwhelmed or worried.

Perhaps what our thinking and praying will lead us to this week is a larger vision of God. Somehow, we need to acquire a "God dominated imagination." We need to answer honestly whether the God we say we believe in is greater than the problems we're dealing with right now.

What do you see as you survey the landscape of your life right now? And how can you step into this week with a God dominated imagination?

### Scripture Reading:

1 Samuel 17

### For Discussion and Reflection:

1. Read 1 Samuel 17:33-37. David had experienced challenges as a shepherd that he saw as preparation for the confrontation with Goliath. In your own life can you identify how challenges in your past prepared you for later challenges?

2. Why is it significant that David chose not to fight in Saul's armor (vv. 38-40)?
3. Read 1 Sam. 17:28-30. What does this suggest about David's relationship with his brother?
4. Read verses 45-47. What is the source of David's confidence in the fight with Goliath? What were other things he might have chosen to rely upon in that moment?
5. David says "the battle is the Lord's." What implications does that statement have for us?

**Prayer:**

God of strength and might, in every threat or challenge that comes to us we are invited to engage the fight in confident faith, believing that "the battle belongs to the Lord." Far too often we face our challenges in our own strength. We depend on our money, our connections, our skill and intelligence. We take up the world's weapons and place our trust in the world's gods. Forgive us we pray. Remind us that we belong to you. Make us bold to live our days as your people. Display your goodness and your power through us in this coming week, we ask in the strong and powerful name of Jesus. Amen.