

Victory

Session 9 • 1 Samuel 17:32-47

ENGAGE

PREPARE: Display **Pack Item 1** (*Map: The Kingdom of Saul*) and **Pack Item 2** (*Poster: Outline of 1 Samuel*) on a focal wall.

ASK: **What opportunities do we have in our daily lives to bring honor to God's name?** (p. 77)

READ: Call on a volunteer to read the opening paragraph on page 77. Highlight the Hemingway quote and ask adults if they agree with it.

DISCUSS: Discuss responses, affirming that taking a stand can be hard. Direct attention to **Pack Item 2** (*Poster: Outline of 1 Samuel*) and encourage adults to pick an outline point that sounds familiar to them. Affirm that "David and Goliath" is one of the most familiar stories in the Bible and serves as the focal passage for this session.

CONTEXT: Set the stage for the battle between David and Goliath:

- *Out of the Philistine camp stepped their champion warrior. Goliath stood 9 feet, 9 inches tall. His military clothing weighed 125 pounds. Goliath's weapons were imposing. Everything about him was imposing. His challenges struck fear in the Israelite soldiers. . . . David might have been young and inexperienced in battle, but he had fought lions and bears to protect his sheep. More than this, David feared the Lord. He lived to honor the Lord's name.* (p. 77)

TRANSITION: *David took a stand for God in the face of an incredible challenge. In this session, we'll see how God gave him an awesome victory. This is a familiar story, but that doesn't mean God can't show you something new. Look at this passage with an open heart and hear what God is saying to you today.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

READ: **Invite a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 17:32-37** as the group identifies David's attitude toward Goliath.

BACKGROUND: Direct attention to **Pack Item 1** (*Map: The Kingdom of Saul*) and highlight the land of Philistia along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Remind adults that Israel and the Philistines had a long history of aggression toward one another during the time of the judges and the reign of Saul. Note that these battles would continue until David finally subdued the Philistines after he became king.

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NOTE: Point out that Saul, much like David's own brother (v. 28), was not impressed with David's faith and courage. Suggest that the king was wallowing in fear like his troops, and his shallow commitment to God did not inspire confidence in the Lord. Instead, he focused on what he saw as David's limitations.

ASK: **When have you faced a difficult situation that challenged your faith?** (p. 79)

RECAP: Note that, unlike Saul, David had experienced God's work in a personal way and that fueled his faith.

- **(17:37)** When David learned that Israel's enemy was openly defying the armies of God, he was astonished that no one stepped forward to defend the Lord's honor. His boldness came from his faith. He trusted that God would deliver him from this Philistine just as He had rescued him from the lion and the bear. By remembering God's past faithfulness, David strengthened his confidence for the battle ahead.

ASK: **How does God's past faithfulness prepare you for today's battles?** (p. 79)

DISCUSS: Direct adults to find a partner and discuss the following question: **What experience with God in your life strengthened your faith and gave you the confidence to trust Him with a big challenge later?** Allow the pairs a few minutes to discuss their responses, then encourage volunteers to share their stories briefly. Affirm that God's work in the past can make a difference in how we approach our "enemies" in life right now.

READ: **Direct the group to read 1 Samuel 17:38-40** silently and to contrast the actions taken by King Saul and the actions taken by David.

ASK: **What happens when we look at life only from a worldly point of view?** (p. 79)

EXPLAIN: Point out that in outfitting David, Saul tried to prepare him for battle as he would. Note that in rejecting Saul's trappings, David demonstrated practical wisdom and deep faith in God. Emphasize that he knew he did not need to dress like Goliath or Saul to win the battle as long as God was on his side.

RECAP: Highlight David's "battle plan" for defeating the giant:

- **(17:40)** *David's choice of weapons stood in sharp contrast to what Goliath was relying on and what King Saul had offered. Instead of the dress and weapons of a warrior, David chose the tools of a shepherd. To fight off wild animals as a shepherd, David used a staff for close confrontations and slingstones to ward off coming prey. Both items David took into battle were not man-made devices but fashioned by God. With the sling, stones, and staff in hand, David approached the Philistine. David considered this battle to be one fought for God's honor and in God's name (1 Sam. 17:45).*

DISCUSS: **What "weapons" do believers have today as they fight for God's honor?** (p. 79)

READ: **Invite a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 17:41-47** as the group reflects on

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the contrast between Goliath's taunts and David's rebuttal to those taunts.

DISCUSS: Lead the group in a brief discussion about why David felt compelled to defend God's honor when so many others in Israel's camp merely succumbed to fear.

ASK: What does it mean to say, "the battle is the LORD's"? (p. 79)

RECAP: Summarize this content to provide more insight into David's words:

- **(17:47)** David recognized that Goliath's skill in battle was formidable. Yet his confidence was not in his own ability, but in the "name of the LORD of Armies, the God of the ranks of Israel." This title emphasizes God's supreme authority and command over the armies of heaven. By invoking it, David both honored the Lord and reminded Israel of God's proven faithfulness in delivering them in the past. With bold conviction, David even foretold Goliath's fate (v. 46). His goal was not personal glory or even Israel's victory, but that the whole world would come to know that Israel has a God.

ASK: How does pursuing God's honor shape how you live your life daily? (p. 79)

SAY: *David was not on a personal conquest. He wanted God to be glorified through conquering the giant who dared to shake his fist at God.*

CHALLENGE

SUMMARIZE: Review these points from this week's Bible study passage:

- God's people can be confident that He is greater than their enemies.
- Believers need to know that the battle to defend God's honor cannot be fought by worldly methods.
- Be zealous for God's honor and trust His strategy so that He will get the glory.

DISCUSS: Direct the group to read the **Apply the Text** questions on page 79 and to share some times they have needed God to fight for them. Encourage them to look for ways they can stand in the gap with others who need that support—and how they can find support when they need to stand up for God.

ASK: What can we do to be ready for the next giant we may face?

PRAY: Close the session in prayer, asking God to help each adult to be sensitive and discerning about situations when they should feel compelled to defend God's honor and to trust in Him. Pray that they have boldness to take a stand, knowing that the battle is the Lord's and He will make Himself known.

AFTER THE SESSION

Send the group a text or email during the week. Challenge them to read and reflect on the **Apply the Text** questions on page 83. Affirm that standing for God can be hard, but remind them that the battle is the Lord's. Encourage them to think through how they can know when to stand still and when to stand and fight. Let them know that you are praying for God's wisdom on behalf of each person.

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