

1 Samuel 17:4-11, 32-40, 45-49

For many Americans, the month of **March** means it's time for **March Madness** - the men's and women's college basketball **tournament** time. In this tournament the teams are **ranked**, so the team which has the **best** chance of winning is ranked **#1**, and the team which has the **worst** chance is ranked **#64**. In the **first game**, they play **each other**. So, you know how sports announcers set up the game - it's **David vs Goliath**.

As you well know, there was an **original** David vs Goliath - a **little** guy vs a **giant** - and you **also** know that the **little** guy **won**. Scripture records this event for us to give us **hope** in the **spiritual** battles which we face **every day** as Christians. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "*Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*" Every day we go to **battle** against the devil, and from a merely **human** perspective, we seem **outmatched** - it's **David vs Goliath**. What we need to **remember** is that these battles aren't about **our strength** - they're about the strength which we have in the **LORD**. **The LORD Is Our Strength, And Our Victory.**

Let's start out today by looking at the account of David vs Goliath in our text. We read, "*A challenger who represented the **Philistines** came out from the camp of the Philistines. He was named **Goliath** of Gath. He was **nine feet, six inches** tall. He had a bronze **helmet** on his head, and he wore **scaled** body armor, which was made of more than **one hundred pounds** of bronze. He had bronze **greaves** on his shins and a bronze **spear** slung between his shoulders. The **shaft** of his spear was like a **weaver's** beam, and his **spearhead** was made of **fifteen pounds** of iron.*"

No doubt about it, Goliath was an **imposing** figure - literally a **giant**. The Philistines had taken up their battle position against the Israelites, and every morning Goliath would stand in the valley **between** the two armies, and **taunt** the Israelite army to send someone out to **fight** against him - mano-a-mano - **winner take all**. But every Israelite soldier - including King **Saul** - was **terrified**. They all knew that they were **outmatched** by this giant - and **Goliath** knew it too.

Then we hear that **David** came to the camp of Israel. There wasn't anything **outwardly special** about him. His father had sent him to the frontline with some **food** for the men, and to find out how his older **brothers** were doing. But when he **arrived**, David heard Goliath **taunting** Israel. He couldn't figure out why **nobody** was **doing** anything about it, so he volunteered **himself** to fight against Goliath. Not surprisingly, King Saul was **not keen** on the idea. Not only was Goliath a **giant** - he was an experienced **warrior** - and David had **no military experience** at all. Goliath was **well armed**, and we're told, "*David took his staff in his hand and picked five smooth stones out of the stream bed and put them into the pouch of his shepherd's bag. He took his sling in his hand and approached the Philistine.*" How do the odds look to **you**? Obviously, **not very good**.

But we know that David had a **secret weapon**. Listen again to what he said as he approached Goliath. "*You come against me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD of Armies, the God of the ranks of Israel, whom you have defied. Today the LORD will hand you over to me. I will strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth. Then all the earth will know that there is a God in Israel, and all those gathered here will know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear, for the battle belongs to the LORD, and he will deliver you into our hand.*" That's **faith**. David was **confident** that **The LORD Was His Strength, And His Victory**.

Now, before going any **farther**, let's take a moment to notice some **similarities** between **David** and **Jesus**. Both of them came from the town of **Bethlehem**. Both of them went up against their enemy **alone** - David against **Goliath**, and Jesus against the **Devil**. In both cases, it was a fight which would affect **many others**. In David's case it was the armies of **Israel**, and in **Jesus'** case it was the entire **world**. Both David and Jesus went into battle at **less than full strength**. David took off his **armor**, and Jesus set aside the full use of His **divine power**. And most important of all, **both** of them armed themselves with **trust** in the **LORD**. David wrote in Psalm 18, "*The LORD is my rocky cliff, my stronghold, and my deliverer. My God is my rock. I take refuge in him. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my high fortress. I call to the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies,*" and these are **also** the words of **Jesus**. Both David and Jesus put their trust in **God**, and they both achieved **victory**.

David's victory over Goliath was certainly **remarkable**. But Jesus' victory over the **Devil** changed **everything**. Jesus defeated the Devil **every day** that He lived here on the earth. He defeated all the **temptations** which the Devil brought against Him in the **wilderness**. And **ultimately**, Jesus **crushed** the Devil's head when He died on the cross of Calvary to suffer the **full punishment** for the world's sins. Then on Easter morning, the Devil's **power** was **crushed**, so he can no longer **harass** us, or **burden** us with our sins, because they've all been **blotted out** by the blood of **Jesus**. That fulfilled His **goal** in life, as the Bible tells us, "*This is **why** the Son of God appeared: to **destroy** the works of the **Devil**.*"

The LORD Is Our Strength, And Our Victory in every battle which we fight in life. This is the faith **David** had as he faced Goliath. He trusted the LORD to be on his side, and to **save** him from his enemy. And this is also the faith which **we** have, as our choir sang earlier, "*Surely it is **God** who saves me, I will trust in **him** and **not** be afraid for the **Lord** is my **stronghold** and my sure **defense**, and he will be my **Savior**.*" We can be **certain** that whenever the Devil **taunts** us with our **sins** - or whenever he tries to **scare** us with **illness** or **financial** problems - **The LORD Will Be Our Strength, And Our Victory**. Jesus is on our side, and "*If **God** is **for** us, who can be **against** us?*"

Perhaps you've heard the saying, "It's not the size of the **dog** in the **fight**, it's the size of the **fight** in the **dog**." It emphasizes that what's going on on the **inside** is more important than what we can see on the **outside**. It doesn't really **matter** how big **we** are, or how big our **bank account** is, or how many college **degrees** we have. It's the **faith** we have in our **heart** that counts - faith in **Jesus** as our **Savior**. So, like David did against **Goliath**, we can **stand strong** in the LORD, and **resist** the Devil, because **The LORD Is Our Strength, And Our Victory**. Amen.