

the  
Jesus   
Storybook  
Bible  
Curriculum

# The young hero and the horrible giant

David and Goliath, from 1 Samuel 17

☉ Please see the curriculum Introduction .pdf for more guidance on praying with your group and on Scripture memory.

☉ The total allotted time per lesson is 45 minutes. This is the minimum amount of time it would take to complete the whole lesson. The time can easily be extended to increase the lesson to as much as 1.5 hours. If you have more than the allocated 45 minutes, please use the extra time to extend the time for activities, to learn the memory verse, and to pray.

☉ The “Notes for Teachers on the Text” section is intended as explanation of the Bible text and advance preparation for you only; it is not expressed in terms or language the children could understand.

*The Jesus Storybook Bible Curriculum*  
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## Recap of the Previous Story

3 min. 

☉ Welcome the children and ask them to sit in a circle. If they have brought a cardboard box with them, ask them to place it in a pile in a corner of the room.

☉ Briefly recap the main point of the previous story: “Last time we met King David in the book of 1 Samuel in the Old Testament. We read about how David had a heart like God’s heart. We also memorized a verse that told us about David’s heart.”

☉ Ask them to recite together the verse they learned at home about the story. “Psalm 16:8 — ‘I keep my eyes always on the LORD. I will not be shaken.’”

☉ To lead into the theme of today’s story, ask: “Is there anything that shakes you or scares you? What scares you?” Get a few answers and possibly share your own funny answer.

## Activity Introducing the Story

10 min. 

**Aim:** To expend energy and learn about fear and courage.

**Materials:** None.

1. Ask: “Have you ever heard a really scary laugh? There are lots of ways to laugh. Sometimes you laugh when you are happy or you see something funny. I’m going to hold up my hand for 5 seconds. Everyone laugh a happy laugh as loud as they can for 5 seconds.” Hold up your hand and count down the 5 seconds on your fingers while also counting aloud.

2. Say: “That’s great, but you were only laughing with your voices. When you see something really funny, your whole body shakes with laughter. Who’d like to go to the center of the circle and show us what a really big laugh does to your whole body?”

3. Give further instructions as necessary; e.g., rock back and forth, hold your stomach, etc. Say: “Very good. I’m going to hold up my hand for 5 seconds. Everyone stand up and laugh a happy laugh as loud as you can with your whole body for 5 seconds.” Hold up your hand and count down the 5 seconds on your fingers while also counting aloud.

4. Say: “Nice job, sit down. That was a happy laugh. But there are other sorts of laughs. What if you wanted to scare someone? How would you laugh if you wanted someone to be scared of you?”

5. Ask someone to go to the center of the circle and demonstrate, giving them further instructions; e.g., stare really hard, point your finger, make yourself look as big as you can, etc. Then ask all the children to stand and laugh a scary laugh for 5 seconds.

6. Say: “Excellent, sit down. If you heard that scary laugh and you were very scared, then you might freeze with fear or curl into a ball or tremble or your teeth might chatter. I’m sure you can think of ways to show that you are scared.”

7. Ask half the circle to stand up and tell them that when the other half of the circle laughs, they should act scared. Count 5 seconds. Reverse so the other half of the circle has a chance to act scared.

8. Say: “There are some people who have courage, who are very brave. True courage is being able to do the right thing even when you are scared. True courage means you do the right thing no matter what. A person with true courage is often called a hero. This time when you hear the scary laugh, you should show true courage and act like a hero.” Repeat step 7 with this exercise.

9. Say: “Wonderful, you looked very brave. But what gives you courage? What makes you brave when you are scared? In the story today there are some people who are scared and there is a young, brave hero. We’re going to see what makes the people scared and what gives the young hero true courage.”

## Story Time

7 min. 

Join the children in the circle and announce the title of the story. Read aloud pages 122–129 from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* or listen to CD2 track 1. If you are reading aloud, you could ask the children to do their scary laugh when Goliath laughs in the story.

### Notes for Teachers on the Text

The well-known story of David and Goliath is a stirring account of courage and faith in God in the face of overwhelming odds. David is just a youth and has no great physical prowess or military might, but he is still able to slay the giant Philistine warrior Goliath. In itself, the story is a clarion call to the reader to be brave, to have faith in God, and to face the giants of life steadfastly.

If you look at the story of David and Goliath in itself, without seeing how it fits into the Bible's overall story (about how God saves us by grace through Christ), the story turns into a moralistic exhortation to "try harder." The moral of the story becomes, "Be like David," or, "Have faith like David and you will have courage." If we read David and Goliath as basically an example, then the story is really about us—we must summon up the faith and courage to face our fears and fight the giants in our lives.

There is another way to read it. Jesus tells us in Luke 24 that everything in the Scriptures reveals something about him. David was Jesus' forefather. So, how does David reveal to us something of the ultimate King and Deliverer, Jesus?

As soon as we begin to answer that question—to put the story of David into the Bible's overall story—we notice some striking similarities:

☉ Like David, Jesus came to his task of deliverance not strong but weak.

☉ Like David, Jesus served in the place of the people he was trying to deliver, so that his victory became their victory. (In the case of David, rather than the two armies fighting a full battle, each side puts forth a "champion," a representative. If your army's champion wins the fight, the whole nation wins the battle.)

☉ Like David, Jesus saves his people by grace, giving them a victory that they did nothing themselves to earn.

Unlike David, however, Jesus did all this not merely at the risk of his life but at the cost of his life. Also unlike David, Jesus did all this not merely to deliver us from the giant of physical captivity, but from the giants of sin and death.

We are like the Israelites; we can't save ourselves. But God does not send the Israelites an example to emulate and inspire them to overcome their fears; he sends a savior.

Of course, the story is a call to be courageous, but if we read the account of David and Goliath as primarily showing us salvation through Jesus, then the story is not just about us, but about him. If we read it this way, we not only have a call to be courageous, but we receive the power to do so. To the degree we rejoice and grasp deeply that Jesus fought the real giants (sin, death) for us—the only giants that can truly hurt us—we will have the courage to be able to fight the giants in life (suffering, disappointment, failure, criticism, hardship).

# Understanding the Story

15 min. 

**Aim:** To understand that God is the one who saves us and that is what gives us courage.

**Materials:** Packaging tape; a large number of cardboard boxes, e.g., shoeboxes or tissue boxes (an alternative to cardboard boxes is to “build” a Goliath from any other objects in the room, so that there is a very large prop to represent Goliath and a very small prop to represent David); crayons; copies of the handout (the last page of this document).

1. At the end of the story, ask: “I said that some people in the story were scared; who was it? Correct, God’s people were scared. They were scared because the Philistines and the giant Goliath were very strong enemies. The people needed someone to save or rescue them. What was the name of the young brave hero who came to rescue them? Yes, it was David.”
2. Quickly hand each child a box and go to the center of the circle. Announce that you are going to make a giant Goliath using the boxes.
3. Ask: “What part of the body should we start with?”
4. Ask a child to bring you a box and start taping boxes together to create the largest cardboard-box Goliath you can. Involve the children in the entire process, asking questions and getting them to help, but you and fellow teachers should be the only ones using the tape. Don’t take too long with this, and save a small box to represent David.
5. Announce that the children will use the “Goliath” to tell the story. Divide the circle in half and ask the groups to sit farther away from one another so there is a gap between them. Give one group the “Goliath” and tell them they are the scary Philistines; give the other group the “David” box and tell them they are God’s people.
6. Show them the picture on pages 122–123 of *The Jesus Storybook Bible* and ask them to point out which group they belong to.
7. Explain that you will call out scenes from the story and then they will act them out.
8. Call out the scenes from the story at a fast pace, pausing when there is an action to ask the groups to act out your words.

STORY	ACTION
The Philistines were standing on top of one hill.	Ask the Philistines to stand.
God’s people were standing on top of the other hill.	Ask the other group to stand.
Every day Goliath shouted, “Send your best soldier to fight me!”	Get the Philistines to repeat Goliath’s words.
God’s people: No one moved. No one spoke.	Get the other group to stand very still and quiet.
And Goliath laughed his terrible laugh.	Get the Philistines to laugh as they did in the first activity.

STORY	ACTION
God's people froze with fear.	Get the other group to freeze and look scared.
David said, "I'll fight him for you! God will help me!"	Get everyone to look surprised.
David picked out five stones and walked toward Goliath.	Ask the child holding David to step forward.
Goliath walked toward David and laughed.	Ask the children holding Goliath to step forward and get the group to laugh.
With just one swing Goliath could finish the boy off. But David said, "It isn't how strong you are that will save you — it is God that saves you!"	Ask the group behind David to repeat his words and act with courage as they did in the first activity.
David put a stone in his sling and let it go. The stone struck Goliath right between the eyes. Goliath fell dead.	Ask the children holding Goliath to lay the boxes down on the floor carefully.
When the Philistines saw Goliath was dead, they went away.	Ask the Philistines to sit down.
God had saved his people. David was a hero! God's people cheered.	Ask the other group to cheer and then sit down.

9. Repeat the story in the preceding table several times so the actions and story become familiar. Every time you repeat it, the pace at which you read and the groups' actions should get faster and faster.

10. Toward the end of the allocated time, ask the children to sit back down in the circle and to place the Goliath and David boxes in the center of the circle. Give each child a copy of the handout and a crayon. Say: "On your paper you can see the Philistines on one side and God's people on the other. There are some questions on the paper. I will read them to you. Circle yes or no."

11. Read the questions aloud, giving the children time to circle their answers. Ask them what they answered and comment appropriately.

12. Say: "God's people had no courage, so God had to send David to rescue them. God gave David true courage, the courage to do the right thing and face the giant. David knew that it is not strength that saves you, but God that saves you."

**For larger groups:** For the first part of the activity, you may want to divide the group in two and assign each smaller group (and teacher) a part of the body to build. They can then all be taped together when everyone is ready.

## Drawing the Story to a Close

1 min. 

Say: “But there was one more part to the story. Let me read it again: ‘Many years later, God would send his people another young Hero to fight for them. And to save them. But this Hero would fight the greatest battle the world has ever known.’ Does anyone know who that Hero is? Say it together. Yes, Jesus.”

Say: “Just like God sent David to save the people from Goliath, God sends Jesus to save us. David had true courage because he knew that God saves us. If you want true courage, the courage to do the right thing even when you are scared, then you need to know it is not strength that saves you, but Jesus that saves you.”

## Jesus in the Story

2 min. 

Ask: “What did we discover about Jesus from today’s story?”

Get a few children to share their answers aloud, commenting appropriately; then ask everyone to write an answer in the space on their handout.

## Praying about the Story

5 min. 

Pray aloud, thanking God that he sent Jesus to save us. Ask God to help you and the children to see more and more that it is God that saves you and that he will give you true courage.

Ask a few of the children to pray, saying thank-you to God because it is not strength that saves, but God that saves.

## A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

2 min. 

☉ Introduce the verse: “The verse we learned helps us with this story too because it is all about where you get courage.”

☉ Announce the verse: “Your verse to practice at home is Psalm 16:8 — ‘I keep my eyes always on the LORD. I will not be shaken.’”

☉ Read the verse out loud together as a group.

☉ Remind the children to give the handout to their parents and to memorize the verse for next time.