

Four Views of David

The valley air was thick with fear. The Israelite army, once proud and strong, now trembled like leaves in a storm. Before them stood Goliath, a monstrous giant clad in bronze, his very presence a weapon of terror. He bellowed insults across the valley, mocking their God, their courage, their very existence. And they were silent, paralyzed by his size and his words. Finally, from Israel's lines came their champion, the young shepherd David. He knew that God's power was not measured in size or strength, but in faith and obedience. Before he could face Goliath, he first had to face the giants of criticism, doubt, and contempt.

1. Setting the Scene:

- a. Battle lines are drawn between Israel and their archenemy Philistia. | 17:1-3
- b. The Philistines propose a winner takes all death match. | 17:8b-10
- c. On one side was the Philistine giant Goliath, on Israel's side... no one. | 17:4-8a
- d. Fear had gripped the men of Israel at the sight and words of Goliath. | 17:11, 24)
- e. Saul promised riches and marriage, but no one took the bait. | 17:24-27
- f. On the fortieth day, young David, the future king of Israel, arrived. | 17:17-23
- g. When David heard the Philistine's taunts, he resolved to fight for the honor of the Lord.

2. Four Views of David:

- a. The Critical View
 - i. Eliab criticized David's motives and presence. | 17:28-30
 - ii. We expect criticism for serving God – but it hurts the most when it's from a brother – but don't let their criticism distract you from God's work. | Mrk 9:38-41; 14:3-9
- b. The “You Can't” View
 - i. Saul doubted David's ability to defeat Goliath. | 17:31-40
 - ii. Some will doubt your ability to serve faithfully – the loudest is the voice in your head – but remember it's God working in you to do His will. | 2 Ths 1:11-12; Php 2:12-13
- c. The Contemptuous View
 - i. Goliath disdained and mocked David. | 17:41-50
 - ii. Expect contempt from the world for following Jesus but remember you're blessed in Him despite their disdain. | Mat 5:11-12; 1 Pet 4:12-16
- d. The Courageous View
 - i. People praised David's courage and victory. | 18:5-7, 18
 - ii. People will praise your service to God but humbly remember you are serving the Lord. | Luk 17:7-10; 1 Pet 5:5-6

In the valley of Elah, in the shadow of the giant, David stood at the crossroads of fear and faith. There he chose to rise above the taunts. He chose to trust. He chose to answer the call of God, even when those around him urged him to cower. And that, my friends, is the choice we face every single day. Will we listen to the voices that tell us we're too small, too weak, too insignificant? Will we allow the giants of fear, doubt, and discouragement to paralyze us? Or will we rise, like David, armed with faith in God's promises?