

David and Goliath

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: Face your giants in the name of the LORD, not in your own strength, so that people see there is a God.

Bible passage: 1 Samuel 17:1–52. Students read 1 Samuel 17:1–11 and 17:32–50 out loud themselves.

Memory verse: "And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands." *1 Samuel 17:47 (KJV)* and "Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied." *1 Samuel 17:45 (KJV)*

You need: a Bible for each student, sticky notes, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.

Before class: read all of 1 Samuel 17. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: Giant List (5–10 minutes)

Give each student three sticky notes. On each one, they write a "giant" that kids their age face: a fear, a hard situation or a pressure (for example: a test they're sure they'll fail, being left out, a family problem, friends pushing them to do wrong). No names. Students stick the notes on the board, and the class sorts them into groups. Ask: *Which of these feel bigger than you? What do most people do when they face something that big?* Say: "Israel had a giant too, and a whole army that froze."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: 1 Samuel 17:1–11. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **pitched** (17:1): set up camp; **set the battle in array** (17:2): lined up for battle
- **champion** (17:4): one soldier who fights for the whole army
- **cubit** and **span** (17:4): about 18 inches and about 9 inches, so about 9 feet 9 inches tall
- **coat of mail** (17:5): armor made of small metal pieces; **shekels**: a weight (5,000 shekels is about 125 pounds)
- **greaves** (17:6): armor for the shins; **target** (17:6): a brass weapon or small shield carried on his back
- **weaver's beam** (17:7): the thick wooden roller on a loom
- **defy** (17:10): dare and insult; **dismayed** (17:11): lost all courage



Tell the middle part in your own words: David was the youngest of Jesse's eight sons, and his three oldest brothers were in Saul's army (17:12–14). Goliath came out morning and evening for forty days (17:16). Jesse sent David with food for his brothers (17:17–18). David heard Goliath and saw the soldiers run (17:23–24). He asked, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (17:26). His brother Eliab got angry and accused him of pride (17:28). David answered, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" (17:29). Saul heard what David said and sent for him (17:31).

Read out loud: 1 Samuel 17:32–50. Old words in this passage:

- **let no man's heart fail** (17:32): don't let anyone lose courage; **thy servant** (17:32): a polite way to say "I"
- **smote** (17:35): struck; **slew** (17:35–36): killed
- **assayed** (17:39): tried; **proved** (17:39): tested, got used to
- **scrip** (17:40): a shepherd's bag
- **disdained** (17:42): looked down on; **ruddy, and of a fair countenance** (17:42): healthy-looking and handsome
- **staves** (17:43): sticks; **cursed David by his gods** (17:43): called on his false gods against David
- **the LORD of hosts** (17:45): the LORD of armies; **carcases** (17:46): dead bodies
- **hasted** (17:48): hurried; **slang** (17:49): slung

Teacher note: verse 46 is honest about war. Let it be read as written, without adding detail, and point to its last words: "that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel." Stop the reading at verse 50, then tell the end yourself: "David took Goliath's own sword and finished the battle. When the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled, and Israel chased them" (17:51–52). Verse 51 also says David cut off the giant's head with that sword; it showed both armies the champion was dead. If a student asks, say so plainly and briefly, and move on.

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. Goliath came out for forty days (17:16) and the whole army was dismayed (17:11). Why do you think no one stepped up? What makes people freeze in front of a "giant" today?
2. David saw the same giant and asked who he was to "defy the armies of the living God" (17:26). How did seeing God first change the way David saw Goliath?
3. Eliab accused David of pride (17:28), Saul said he was too young (17:33), and Goliath disdained him (17:42). How did David handle each one? What do you do when people doubt you for trusting God?
4. David's courage came from remembering what God had already done (17:34–37). What has God done in your life that you can remember when you're afraid?
5. David put off Saul's armor because he had not proved it (17:39). What's the difference between trusting God and copying someone else's way of doing things?
6. David said he fought so "that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (17:46) and that "the LORD saveth not with sword and spear" (17:47). Who got the glory? How can your life point people to God instead of to yourself?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words: **assembly** means everyone gathered there; **saveth** means saves; **thou comest** means you come; **the LORD of hosts** means the LORD of armies; **whom thou hast defied** means whom you have insulted and dared. Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say 1 Samuel 17:47 this week; keep working on 17:45 next week too.

5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "David didn't come in his own name or Saul's. He came 'in the name of the LORD' (17:45). The name matters to God. Peter preached about Jesus: 'Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' (Acts 4:12, KJV) God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5). That is the real victory: 'But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' (1 Corinthians 15:57, KJV)"

Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. What "giant" am I facing right now? Is it bigger than me, or bigger than God?
2. What has God already done for me that I can remember, like David remembered the lion and the bear (17:37)?
3. Write a short prayer giving this battle to God and asking Him for courage.
If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: take one giant off the sticky-note board and pray about it every day. When you feel afraid, say 1 Samuel 17:47.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that the battle is Yours. Give us courage to stand when others freeze, help us remember what You have done, and let our lives show that there is a God. Thank You for loving us and making a way to save us through Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks "Is it okay to fight someone who is mean to me?": answer honestly. Goliath was an enemy soldier in a real war who defied God (17:10, 17:26), and David trusted God to protect His people (17:45–47). That is not permission to start fights. When someone is mean to us, we pray, tell a trusted adult, and trust God with the battle.

