HUDSON'S HOPE CHAPEL

The Battle Is the Lord's

September 20, 2026 · Series: After God's Own Heart · Luke Hughes-Bunger

Main Passage: 1 Samuel 17:31-54 (ESV); narrative context: 1 Samuel 17:1-30

Big Idea: Jesus is the greater David. He defeats the greater enemies of sin, death, and the devil, and shares His victory with everyone who trusts Him.

Introduction - Forty Days of the Same Voice

For forty days, Goliath challenges Israel to send someone to fight him. The armies stand on opposite sides of a valley. Israel's soldiers and their king, Saul, are afraid. Then David arrives with food for his brothers.

The rest of the story is familiar: a young shepherd, five stones, a sling, and a fallen giant. We use David and Goliath to describe a small person or group defeating a powerful opponent. It is easy to hear the passage as encouragement to become brave enough to overcome our own problems.

But look at the people behind David. They do not defeat Goliath. They receive the benefit of David's victory. Goliath has proposed that one man fight for each side, with the freedom of the people depending on the result. God provides someone to stand for His people.

David is already anointed as God's chosen king, although Saul still occupies the throne. His courage matters, but his place in the story also matters. He delivers people who cannot deliver themselves. This leads us toward Jesus, the greater King who wins the victory we need and invites us to share it.

The God David Remembers

1 Samuel 17:26, 31-37

David hears the same challenge as the soldiers, but he asks a different question. Why should this Philistine defy the armies of the living God? Goliath describes Israel as Saul's servants. David remembers that they belong to the Lord.

David calls Goliath uncircumcised. Circumcision is the sign marking Israel as God's covenant people, the people to whom He has made His promises. David's concern is that Goliath speaks as though their God has no power to save them.

Saul sees a young man facing an experienced warrior. His observations are accurate. Trusting God does not require pretending that danger is small or experience is irrelevant. But David also remembers what God has done.

While caring for sheep, David has fought lions and bears that threatened the flock. He has used courage and skill, yet he gives the credit for his survival to the Lord. The God who delivered him then is the God he trusts now.

David's confidence grows from remembered deliverance. His shepherding has taught him dependence on God as well as practical skills. Now God's chosen king steps forward for people held in fear.

Remembering God's Faithfulness

Fear can narrow our attention. We rehearse a difficult conversation or an uncertain future until the danger feels like the only reality. Prayer gives us room to remember God's mercy as well as name our concerns.

We can remember forgiveness, help received through another person, or strength for a responsibility we could not manage alone. Above all, Christians can look to Jesus' cross and resurrection. Our greatest reason for confidence is something our King has already accomplished.

David's confidence in this particular battle belongs to his calling within God's purpose for Israel. It does not create a formula by which every risk we take must succeed. We learn to trust God's character and promises, rather than treating past experiences as a way to control Him.

This week, bring one specific fear into prayer. Name it honestly, then remember a specific mercy of God. Let the finished work of Jesus shape how you approach your Father with that concern.

What the Battle Will Show

1 Samuel 17:38-47

Saul gives David his armour. David tries it but removes it because he has not tested it. He takes his staff, chooses five stones, and approaches Goliath with his sling.

David prepares and uses equipment he knows. Dependence on God does not make planning, practice, or asking for help unnecessary. The passage gives no hidden spiritual meaning to the five stones. Its emphasis is on the Lord who saves.

Goliath sees someone he considers beneath him. He curses David by his gods and threatens him. David answers that he comes in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel's armies. The title speaks of God's authority over armies; His power is greater than the weapons everyone can see.

David says the victory will make God known throughout the earth. Israel itself must also learn that the Lord's power to save does not depend on sword and spear. God's honour and the good of His people are at stake.

The words about death and judgment are serious. This is an account of an actual battle within God's dealings with Israel. It does not give Christians permission to threaten people or treat personal disagreements as holy wars.

Making God Known

David's concern challenges prayers that revolve around our reputation. We may ask for help while assuming that help must mean proving us right. God's honour can call us to admit a fault, tell the whole truth, or accept correction.

For our church, trusting God's power means serving with hope. We can plan, share meals, care for neighbours, and speak clearly about Jesus. We ask God to bring people to faith because our resources cannot create that response on their own.

People who disagree with us are neighbours to love. They are not Goliaths for us to defeat. We can listen patiently, show practical care, and invite them to discover the King who welcomes those who trust Him.

God's saving power gives purpose to our witness. We have good news to share because Jesus has won a victory that people everywhere need.

A Victory Shared

1 Samuel 17:48-54; Hebrews 2:14-15; Romans 8:1

David runs toward the battle, slings a stone, and strikes Goliath. The giant falls. David then uses Goliath's sword to finish the victory. The Philistines flee, and Israel rises to pursue them.

Israel's action follows the victory David wins. Their sudden courage does not cause his success. His success changes their situation and opens the way for them to act.

David is a representative: one person acts on behalf of others. In this scene, God's anointed king stands for His people and brings them deliverance. We can learn from his faith while recognizing that his particular role points beyond us.

Jesus, the Greater David

David's victory has limits. He cannot remove Israel's sin or raise its dead. He needs God's mercy himself and will eventually die. Jesus, the promised King from David's family, accomplishes the greater deliverance.

Our deepest enemies cannot be overcome through determination. Sin makes us guilty before God. Death reaches beyond human power to rescue. The devil accuses and enslaves. We need a Saviour who can deal with all three.

Jesus shares our humanity and obeys His Father without sin. At the cross, He stands in the place of sinners and bears the judgment we deserve. Hebrews 2 explains that through His death He defeats the devil and delivers people enslaved by the fear of death.

David risks his life and kills the enemy. Jesus gives His life to save people who have sinned against Him. Then He rises from the grave. His resurrection secures the future resurrection of everyone who belongs to Him.

Through faith, we are joined to Jesus and receive the benefits of His work. His death answers for our guilt. His risen life guarantees our future. His victory brings us forgiveness and peace with

God.

Romans 8:1 declares that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. This is God's verdict because of Jesus' work. It does not change according to how confident or courageous a Christian feels.

Receiving His Victory

A person exploring Christianity does not need to become impressive before coming to Jesus. We come acknowledging our sin and need, trusting Him to save us. Faith receives what He gives; it does not add a missing part to His achievement.

Believers also need this reminder. We can turn faith into another measure of personal strength, judging ourselves by how calmly we pray. A frightened believer rests on the same Saviour as a confident one. We grow in trust by returning our attention to Him.

The invitation is to belong to the King David points toward. Jesus has accomplished what we cannot accomplish for ourselves, and everyone who trusts Him shares in His victory.

Because He Has Acted

1 Corinthians 15:57-58

Christ's victory has real benefits now. Those who belong to Him are forgiven, have peace with God, and can approach Him as their Father. His Spirit lives in them and supplies strength to turn from sin and follow Jesus.

Resurrection remains ahead of us; we are not promised that every circumstance will go our way today. Yet forgiveness, God's welcome and presence, and the power to begin living differently are already ours.

We can pray boldly for healing, reconciliation, and provision while trusting our Father's wisdom. We can confess sin and accept accountability because Christ has dealt with our condemnation. We can ask others for help because receiving grace belongs to Christian life from the beginning.

Paul thanks God for giving us victory through Jesus, then urges steady service. In the Lord, our labour is not wasted. The order matters: God gives the victory, and we respond with faithful work. Our obedience grows from salvation already received.

Choose one response this week. Tell the truth about something you have hidden. Ask someone to pray with you. Make a caring phone call, prepare a meal, or return to a responsibility with renewed hope. These actions express trust in the risen King rather than an attempt to earn His acceptance.

Jesus is the greater David. His victory gives us a secure place to stand, a reason to serve, and a future with Him. We can live from that victory today as we wait for its fullness in the resurrection.

Discussion Guide Questions

1. What do people usually mean by a David-and-Goliath story? What can that familiar reading miss?
2. Read 1 Samuel 17:8-11. Why does the outcome of one fight matter to both armies?
3. What difference does David's description of Israel as the armies of the living God make?
4. Read verses 34-37. How does David explain his past deliverance? What helps you remember God's faithfulness?
5. What do David's armour and sling show about the relationship between preparation and trust?
6. According to verses 45-47, what does David want Israel and the world to learn?
7. How might concern for God's honour change a conversation where we want to prove ourselves right?
8. What changes for Israel after David wins? Why is it important that their action follows his victory?
9. How is Jesus greater than David? How do Hebrews 2:14-15 and Romans 8:1 explain His victory?
10. What has Christ secured for believers now, and what do we still await?
11. Read 1 Corinthians 15:57-58. How does receiving victory lead to purposeful service?
12. What is one concrete response you can make this week because you belong to the risen King?