

“A Story of Courage and Wit”

Scripture: I Samuel 17 (The Rhyme Bible)

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Springfield, Illinois

The story of David and Goliath is a story told by a nation of their hero king. The reign of David was the “golden age” of Israel. This story presents David as a young man of extraordinary courage and conviction. Yet, the energy of the story comes not from the actions of the hero alone, but from David’s relationship with God.

The title of the meditation: “A Story of Courage and Wit”

Let us pray: Living and Creative God, we thank you for this story of faith. Give each of us the courage and wit of David to face the giants in our own lives. Amen.

This morning our children, under the direction of Dale Rogers present “The Rock Slinger and His Greatest Hit,” the story of David and Goliath. In this delightful and beloved story we learn an important lesson about life and faith.

David, a boy too young to fight in battle and the youngest son in a relatively unknown Israelite family comes forward to remind King Saul and the whole Israelite army that their God Yahweh is the Living God who saves. A truth that the king and his soldiers had surely known and celebrated at one time, however over the years in the battles of their lives they had forgotten. They had faced one too many bullies, “Goliaths” or “giants” that seemed insurmountable. Ironically, Walter Brueggeman tells us in the Interpretation Commentary that although this Philistine was indeed a very large man about six feet nine inches tall and his presence would be terribly intimidating, he was probably not a giant.

But isn’t that the way life sometimes can be for us. Problems or obstacles that we face become bigger than life itself. No, the Israelites were not the first or the last to develop tunnel vision in seeing creative solutions to a problem or overcoming an obstacle.

David’s courage to face Goliath at all and his wit, his wisdom to face Goliath unconventionally, with five smooth stones and a sling teach us all something about the surprising ways of God, which astonish us in our usual measures of influence and power. David brings a radically different understanding to power. God is the One in whom power has its origin. David affirms God’s power by coming against Goliath with only the tools of a shepherd. This is in vivid contrast with Saul’s plan to engage both armies in battle... And David’s well placed stone of opposition reminds us that there are chinks in all systems of oppression that loom over us as armored giants.

The shepherd boy...the rock slinger teaches us anew that trusting God, we are all called to confront the bullies of oppression. Thank God for the “Davids” among us, who continue to face the “giants” of injustice in our world, who listen to the voice of truth within and who demonstrate the power and love of a just and gracious God. A God, who is our shield and our strength, a present help in need! Amen.