

1 samuel 17:1-58 sermon

Main point: Like He did Israel through David, God has through Jesus saved us from an unbeatable enemy.

Application: Trust in Jesus victory over our enemies of sin and death, share in the victory and live victorious.

- Consider where i may be trusting in the wrong things to deal with sin and death.
- Investigate further what Jesus has done for me and my sin on the cross.
- Trust and depend on Jesus victory over sin and death in my fight for holiness.

Introduction: where do you look?

Have you ever been face to face with death?

- my story when I almost died as a 12 year old backflipping into the pool.

I was unconscious underwater, I couldn't save myself

My brother stepped in.

If I faced death then, I wasn't ready and so this moment helped me search for answers to the big questions in life. What would happen after I die? Is there a way to beat death and judgment?

I looked into all sorts of beliefs, Buddhism, Hinduism, islam and Christianity but that's where I stopped.

Because it's there that we find death and judgment conquered.

Where do you look when you're face to face with death and judgment, face to face with life's biggest enemies?

In today's passage we see where Israel looks when they are faced with their biggest enemy.

A giant enemy:

- Set the scene – 2 camps on two hills with a valley in the middle (picture on powerpoint).
- ENTER Goliath
 - He is a *“lean, mean, Israelite killing machine”*
 - 3m tall according to vs 4 (use measuring tape)
 - wore a coat of armour 57kg and used a javelin with a 7kg iron point. (use weights)
 - And all in bronze! He was a *shiny, lean, mean, israelite killing machine*

We often don't take the danger of Goliath seriously enough. He was truly terrifying, to Israel he was the embodiment of death and slavery. Not only did he look undefeatable, but defeat to Him would cause horrible consequences.

Goliath sets the agenda for this battle in verses 8-9.

<Read 8-9>

This battle is a battle between life and death, between freedom and slavery. And Israel could not win. The Israelites were then under the fear of death and slavery and flee'd Goliath day after day.

An unexpected hero:

- ENTER David, the unexpected hero.
 - What do we know about David.
 - He's a shepherd boy, not a warrior (15)
 - He's the runt of the family, picked on by his brothers (28-29)
 - He's the servant of the king, not the leader of Israel (32)

- Most importantly he see's Goliath from God's perspective, as defying God's army (26 + 36 + 45-47)
- But before this runt of the family shepherd and servant goes to battle with Goliath, we have what I think is the most ironic scene in all of the bible. Saul dressing David for battle.
 - Fighting Goliath is Saul's job! It's what Israel appointed him to do
 - Kings back then were also the military leaders of their country
 - And if you were to flick back to 1 sam 8:20 where Israel outlines why they want a king – you'll see they wanted a king for moments like this! and Saul doesn't deliver!
 - Not only was Saul appointed for this but Saul was the most physically equipped to fight Goliath. The first mentioning of Saul in the book describes him as "an impressive young man, without equal among the Israelites, a head taller than any of the others. (1 Sam 9:2)
 - The equivalent of this scene in modern is like Stu being both the Prime minister and chief of Army in Australia. He's the royal soldier, a head taller than the rest of the country dressing me to go fight the giant Goliath. That's the scene here.
 - It's obvious from this part of the passage that Israel had put their hopes in the wrong place when they elected Saul as their leader. He might look like he'd be a great leader but when push came to shove he failed them. When push came to shove, he couldn't save them or lead them against the enemies they needed to defeat.
- But God had raised up a hero for Israel, an unexpected one but a hero nonetheless and he goes out in confidence that God will strike down those who oppose God's people and with one well aimed smooth stone he takes down the Giant the whole nation feared in a display of God's power over the great enemy of His people.
 - David then displays Goliath's head so that the Israelite army would know that the power of the enemy, the great Goliath has been destroyed.
 - And in David's victory on their behalf the nation of Israel now surges out into battle with shout. They are now able to fight what had previously paralyzed them in fear.
- Since I first read this story as a teen I have always found this story great. And the greatest thing about this story is that despite how incredible it is, it's just a foreshadowing of a greater reality. A reality that is entirely relevant for all people not just for Israel.

Our unexpected Hero:

- If you trace a shadow back to the object that causes it you will realise the object is far greater than the shadow it produces. Silhouettes can make wonderful art but they can never fully encapsulate the beauty of the object they are representing.

- And this passage is a stunning silhouette that points to when God raised up the most unexpected hero to defeat the world's greatest enemy.
- This story points directly to Jesus as the ultimate unexpected hero who defeats the enemy we cannot defeat, the enemy of sin and death.
- Like Israel before the Philistines we too have enemies we can't defeat. And like Goliath's challenge before the army of Israel our battle is also a matter of life or death and a matter of slavery or freedom
 - Firstly we are enslaved to sin, sin is the bible's word for rebellion against God. It's when we pursue what *we think* is best in opposition to what *God knows* is best.
 - Have you ever tried to escape sin? Have you ever tried to go a day without sinning? A day without ever being selfish, a day without ever going against god's good design for how we ought to live. I promise you that you cannot do it. And it's not because you're any worse than the rest of us but it's because we are all slaves to sin, we cannot help but serve it as our master in place of God.
 - And the bible tells us that the wages we earn by sinning is the other great enemy of humanity, it's death. Our sins earn us death and judgment.
 - Our enemy is bigger than Goliath. And the consequences of losing to our enemy is greater also, if we die, defeated by sin and under God's judgment the biblical reality for our eternity is hell. a place described as containing eternal torment and suffering.
- So who do we turn to in our despair?
 - Some of us turn to good deeds, hoping that being a nice person will make God unable to punish us, but the truth is we cannot "outnice our sin". We can never give enough money to charity, come to church enough, read our bible enough or help enough elderly people cross the street to compensate for our sinful rebellion against our creator.
 - Some of us turn to our possessions and relationships and the things of this world, as if living a life now with those things will be worth whatever happens after we die. But no amount of money and wealth and no relationships will be able to satisfy us enough to make death and judgment bearable.
 - Trusting in these things is like trusting in Saul for the Israelites. They might look like they will do the job, but when you're face to face with the enemy, with death and judgment, they don't deliver.
 - There's no baggage compartment in a hearse. You can't take your possessions with you after you die.
 - And as great as your travel or relationships were while you lived, they won't rescue you from the fear of death when you lay on your death bed.

- But praise God that he didn't leave us in this state, and that he rose up for us a leader just like he did for Israel with David.
 - An unexpected hero, and the hero we needed. Jesus.
- At the cross Jesus battled and conquered the enemies of sin and death on our behalf.
 - Just as the servant David walked out and fought on the king's behalf
 - So too with Jesus we see the servant King fight on behalf of his people.
 - Just as David was willing to face death in facing an enemy God's people couldn't defeat
 - Jesus too was not only willing to die but actually died in order to defeat sin and death for God's people.
 - And like David's victory over Goliath became all of Israel's victory and allowed them to live free as a nation,
 - So too Jesus victory over sin and death becomes our victory though we didn't even have to lift 1 smooth stone in order to conquer it.
- You see When Jesus died on the cross he was wearing our great enemy with him, the death we deserved for our sin, He took it upon himself and died the death we deserved in order that we might live the life he deserved.

God has raised up a hero who can rescue us from our greatest enemies. And all we have to do is follow him in his victory already won.

In Jesus we can know for certain that he will not fail us because we have already seen his victory at the cross and resurrection, all we need to do is follow him into the battle against an already powerless enemy.

Conclusion:

- Who will you follow in your fight against sin and death? The Saul's of our day or Jesus.
 - We so often follow the things that look like they are victorious in this world. We follow the example of the righteous because they look like they'd be acceptable to God. But following righteousness is like following Saul. He might look the part but when push comes to shove he can't deliver.
 - When you are face to face with sin and death, like Israel you need a strength outside of yourself.
 - And we have seen and we have heard of the strength that is able to conquer. A strength that nails the sins of those who trust in Him to the cross, a power that rises when crucified and that power is Jesus Christ.

- David was just a shadow to the reality that Christ is the real unexpected hero. It's for this very reason that Paul says to the Corinthian church
 - we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. (1Cor. 1:23-24)
 - Following Jesus seems foolish to the world, just like following David would have. But Jesus is the unexpected hero we need. The one who truly delivers when it comes to saving us from sin and death.
- If you are wrestling with your own sin, feeling as if God couldn't or maybe wouldn't want to save you, or if you are still in a state of fearing where you'll go after you die, look to the ultimate David and his greatest victory –the death and resurrection of Jesus.
 - The cross and resurrection of Jesus is the embodiment of the knowledge that God is **powerful** enough to save you from sin and death and that he loves you so much he is **willing** to save you, even when it cost him his life.
 - That is the motivator for faith in Christ.
- And for my Christian brothers and sisters, the freedom Jesus won us, we ought to live in it.
 - After David's victory over Goliath and the Philistines It would be ridiculous for an Israelite to say, well you know what I'm going to go live as a slave to the philistines anyway, I kind of deserve it for not fighting Goliath myself...
 - Likewise it is ridiculous for a Christian to live under slavery to sin, the very thing Jesus defeated for our freedom. We live fighting against sin because Christ has freed us from sin. When Jesus returns or call us home, sin will be defeated once for all but until then we fight and struggle to live under Christ's rule not sins. just as the Israelite army charged into battle after seeing David defeat Goliath
- And when we struggle with sin and the fear of death, we look to Christ and see our victory already won. When the struggle is real, and our sins are getting us down we only need to look to the cross, where our sins were crucified, and the resurrection where Jesus in His victory held up the beheaded head of sin and death. In doing this we will be applying the words of the song "before the throne of God above" which says:

*When Satan tempts me to despair
And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look and see Him there
Who made an end of all my sin.
Because the sinless Saviour died
My sinful soul is counted free.
For God the just is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me.*

- Who will you trust to defeat your greatest enemies? When you're face to face with the reality of death and when you're losing the battle with your own sin, who will you turn too for help?
 - Will you trust in the Saul's of this world, wealth, relationships and your own good deeds?
 - Or will you turn to Jesus Christ, the better David, who died that we might live, who slaved for us that we might be made free from sin.