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**The Challenge Of The Giant (1 Sam. 17:1-11)**

**Battle Lines Are Drawn (1 Sam. 17:1-3)**

*1 Now the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle, and were gathered at Sochoh, which belongs to Judah; they encamped between Sochoh and Azekah, in Ephes Dammim. 2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and they encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array against the Philistines. 3 The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them.*

- This is one of the most well-known, and pivotal chapters in the entire Bible. See how great God’s power can at work in the life of someone who loves Him and is committed to follow Him, someone who will step out in faith.
- Powerful themes and contrasts in this chapter:
  - Man’s choice vs. God’s choice
  - Working for the honor of men or for the honor of God
  - Fear vs. Faith
  - Supernatural evil vs. the supernatural power of God
  - Professionalism vs. the Anointing
- War continued between Israel and the Philistines. The Philistines are still in the midst of the territory of Judah, perhaps ~ 12 miles from David’s home.

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- Israel was gathered – but was it being led?
- This was a classic face-off across an open valley.

**Enter The Giant (1 Sam. 17:4)**

*4 And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. 5 He had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. 6 And he had bronze armor on his legs and a bronze javelin between his shoulders. 7 Now the staff of his spear was like a weaver’s beam, and his iron spearhead weighed six hundred shekels; and a shield-bearer went before him.*

- This is not a champion in the modern sense of the English language, but a “man of the in-between.” He would come out to engage in single combat against the champion of the other army. This is the most elaborate description we have of any fighter in the Scripture.
- *The name Goliath.* This name may come from what is now Turkey, and may mean strong or powerful. This is a picture of how the enemy presents himself.
- *The city of Gath.* This was one of those five powerful cities of the Philistines, and it was the one that was the deepest inside Israel.
- *Gath a home of giants.* “None of the *Anakim* were left in the land of the children of Israel; they remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod.” (Joshua 11:22)

**Understanding Giants**

- Giants occur not only in Genesis, but in other places in the Old Testament.
- There were different tribes of them in and around the Promised Land.

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- Some Anakim (“long necks”) survived when Joshua invaded the land.
- Goliath was six cubits and a span, equivalent to about nine feet, nine inches tall. Scripture says he was one of the giants, or *Rephaim*.

**Who Are The Rephaim?**

- Men like Goliath were not ordinary human beings. The typical name for such beings was *Rephaim*. The *Anakim* was a type or a tribe of *Rephaim*.
- The *Rephaim*, in turn, are the descendants of beings called the *Nephilim*.
- In Genesis chapter 6 it says, *1 Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, 2 that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. 3 And the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.” 4 There were giants [Hebrew = “Nephilim”] on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown....*
- There are two theories about this. One view is the Sethite theory. This view says the Sons of God were men from the line of Seth who sinned by intermarrying with ungodly people. The second view says these Sons of God were fallen angels.
- Moses says there were giants in the earth in the days of Noah, and *afterwards*. This explains their presence as early as the time of Abraham and as late as David.
- Fallen angels (created by God) --> *Nephilim* (1st generation giant, angel/human hybrid) --> *Rephaim* tribes (children of the *Nephilim* such as the *Anakim*, etc.)

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## Angels Who Left Their Place

In 2 Peter 2:4 we read that *...God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell [Tartarus] and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment...*

- Apparently, some angels sinned and have already been confined in Hell.
- This is the only biblical reference to the place known as Tartarus.
- Jude says, *...the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day...* (Jude, v.6)
- This was the belief in ancient Judaism, around the Middle East and beyond.

## Goliath's Equipment

- A coat of mail weighing ~110 pounds, based on a shekel of 0.30 to 0.40 ounces.
- Bronze armor like shin guards, called greaves.
- The javelin is probably actually a small sword.
- A spear like a weaver's beam indicates that it probably had a strap you could use to sling it with great velocity and greater accuracy.
- An iron spearhead weighing 20 pounds!
- Goliath's appearance was a perfect picture of Satan's intimidation.

## The Challenge (1 Sam. 17:8-11)

*8 Then he stood and cried out to the armies of Israel, and said to them, "Why have you come out to line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and you the servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. 9 If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him,*

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*then you shall be our servants and serve us.” 10 And the Philistine said, “I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.” 11 When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.*

- This is the Devil’s question to us for sure. Why have you even bothered?
- Pick your champion!
- Goliath says, “Choose a man for yourselves.” Hasn’t this been exactly the problem for many years?
- There is always someone bigger and mightier according to the flesh.
- The terms of the contest...
- Goliath was shaming Israel, putting them to a reproach.
- This may be the most common description of Saul in the Bible, that he was afraid.
- Thank God that Israel had a hidden, unknown champion nearby, and thank God that we do, too!

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