



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

1 Samuel 17:1-58

“David and Goliath”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Tonight, in the second of our studies in the life of David, we are turning to 1 Samuel chapter 17 and we are studying the incident of David and Goliath tonight. This is one of the most familiar of all the stories in the Bible of course. I remember many years ago when I preached my first sermon on David and Goliath. It was not my first sermon by a long shot. In fact I had preached for a considerable period of time, and when I told my son at home that it was the first sermon that I had ever preached on David and Goliath he said, “Well that’s one of the first I would preach on. I know it so well.” And I remember that at the time that comment struck me as being true to life because it was one of the stories that I remembered from my Sunday school, my checkered Sunday school history, I might say. This story is one that I do remember. But so far as the lessons and the spiritual significance of it are concerned, that’s something that I never did learn when I studied it in Sunday school.

In 1 John chapter 5 and verse 4 we read, “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is that which overcomes even our faith.” And, this of course illustrates that. It also illustrates very well the truth that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews sets

forth in the 2nd chapter and the 14th and 15th verses of his book, when in speaking about the death of Christ he says,

“Since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.”

It seems to me that this is one of the important lessons that we learn from the struggle of David and Goliath because it points on into the future to the struggle that the Lord Jesus Christ had on the cross of Calvary with Satan himself.

Now I think since this is a rather lengthy chapter and I'd like to cover the whole of the story that we'll do tonight what we've been doing from time to time on Wednesday nights. I'd like to read a section and just make a few comments as we go along, and then at the conclusion, I'd like to draw a couple of lessons from this important chapter in the life of David. So let's begin reading and in the first 16 verses of 1 Samuel chapter 17 we have the historical situation in which this conflict between David and Goliath took place. And in the opening verses we have some words that touch on the geography of the battlefield because it does bear on the battle itself.

“Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle; and they were gathered at Socoh which belongs to Judah, and they camped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephesdammin. Saul and the men of Israel were gathered and camped in the valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array to encounter the Philistines. The Philistines stood on the mountain on one side while Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with the valley between them.”

The valley referred to here was not simply the valley of Elah, but in the midst of the valley of Elah there was a ravine, which was very deep and also very steep, and because it was deep and sharp and steep, this is why the two armies were able to gather in sight of each other and yet at the same time not be able to approach each other. And it was also why Goliath, in the heavy armor which he had on, why he was unable to cross from one part of the field where the Philistines were, to the place where the Israelites were. After all his armor weighed probably from two to four hundred pounds and that was quite a load to be carrying around, not the kind of thing that you would want to go down into a steep ravine and try to get out with. He might still be there.

Now in the next verses, verses 4 through 16 as the historical situation is developed the writer describes the men who are involved in the conflict. We read in verse 4, “Then a champion came out from the armies of the Philistines named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.” The word “champion” is a Hebrew word that means literally, “a man of two middles,” or “a mediator,” and so the word “champion” suggests the fact that from the beginning that Goliath was acting as a representative for the Philistines, or the Philistines, if you pronounce it that way. And he was acting as a representative or as a mediator, and in a moment he will speak as a mediator and challenge Israel to send forth a man in order that they might settle the fight in the struggle between just the two men.

Incidentally, it says his height was six cubits and a span. There’s a little bit of debate over exactly what length a cubit was, but he was either a man of nine and a half feet tall, or eight feet, five and a third inches. He was the Wilt Chamberlin of the Philistines or whoever that fellow is that’s playing for Perdue this year who’s seven feet something. Incidentally, this is not the tallest man in history. In nineteen hundred and five there was a Russian who appeared by the name of Machnow. He appeared in Brittan, and he was nine feet, eight inches tall. So this is not something supernatural. It’s

not the kind of height that we normally see, but nevertheless it's not something that is contrary to what we know of history.

The 5th verse continues, “He had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was clothed with scale-armor which weighed five thousand shekels of bronze.” Now a “shekel” was the equivalent of two-thirds of an ounce. And so this was a considerably large armor and a very heavy armor that Goliath had on. In fact it was an enormous armor.

“He also had bronze greaves on his legs and a bronze javelin slung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and the head of his spear weighed six hundred shekels of iron; his shield-carrier also walked before him. He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel and said to them, ‘Why do you come out to draw up in battle array? Am I not the Philistine and you servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will become your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall become our servants and serve us.’ Again the Philistine said, ‘I defy the ranks of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together.’”

Now, the writer of the account turns to Saul. Now Saul was a very tall and imposing figure himself, but of course, the spirit of Saul is quite different from the spirit of Goliath. “When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.” It's very interesting to me that in the New Testament it is said that God has not given us the spirit of fear, but the spirit of a sound mind. Now, Saul, we do not know whether he was a believer or not. Bible students have debated this down through the decades, I suppose, and it's impossible for us to decide, but here he does not act like a man that is really trusting in the Lord. He was “dismayed and greatly afraid.”

Now the writer of the account turns to the consideration of David.

“Now David was the son of the Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, whose name was Jesse, and he had eight sons. And Jesse was old in the days of Saul, advanced in years among men. The three older sons of Jesse had gone after Saul to the battle. And the names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and the second to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. David was the youngest. Now the three oldest followed Saul, but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's flock at Bethlehem.”

He was a shepherd just like Jacob was a shepherd, but he did, from time to time, visit the brothers in order to take them food and to find out how they were as they were in the Israelitish army over against the Philistines. “Then Jesse said to David his son,” and here we have described a mission, a commissioning from David's father that he go to the battlefield.

“Jesse said to David his son, ‘Take now for your brothers an ephah of this roasted grain and these ten loaves and run to the camp to your brothers. Bring also these ten cuts of cheese to the commander of their thousand, and look into the welfare of your brothers, and bring back news of them. For Saul and they and all the men of Israel are in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.’ So David arose early in the morning and left the flock with a keeper and took the supplies and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the circle of the camp while the army was going out in battle array shouting the war cry. Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle array, army against army. Then David left his baggage in the care of the baggage keeper, and ran to the battle line and entered in order to greet his brothers.”

The writer then turns to discuss the defiance of the armies of Israel by Goliath in verse 23 through verse 30.

“As he was talking with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine from Gath named Goliath, was coming up from the army of the Philistines, and he spoke these same words; and David heard them. When all the men of Israel saw the man, they fled from him and were greatly afraid. The men of Israel said, ‘Have you seen this man who is coming up? Surely he is coming up to defy Israel. And it will be that the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel.’”

Now you can see the spirit of the children of Israel. They are thinking of Goliath. They are terrified and astonished, in the bad sense, by this warrior from the Philistines. But now we'll notice what David was thinking about. “Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, ‘What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?’” They thought of Goliath. David thought of Goliath's relationship to God. He calls him an “uncircumcised Philistine.” And what he means by that is that he's not one of the covenant people. He's not one of those in right relationship to the Lord. And so David is thinking of spiritual things. They're thinking of physical things. They're terrified of the man, but David is thinking his relationship to God. Furthermore you'll notice here too, he says, “That he should taunt the armies of the living God.” So in a sense they're thinking about man, David's thinking about God. And there's all the difference in the world between the two viewpoints.

Now in verse 27 the account continues, “The people answered him in accord with this word, saying, ‘Thus it will be done for the man who kills him.’ (In other words, the

things that are mentioned above will be given to him) Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger burned against David.” I'm sure that Eliab probably also thought, like many do think when they're in an army and someone suggests that they do something that might require a little courage, you can just imagine one of the soldiers turning to him, David, when he came in and saying, “What's the matter? Aren't any of you going out to accept the challenge of that fellow?” And one of the ancient GI's in the army of Israel says, “Now, look here young fellow, we've been in the army a short time but we've been here long enough to know that you don't volunteer for anything in the army.” So you can just about imagine that Eliab's anger is not only anger at the effrontery of this young man, but anger that he doesn't understand anything about an army.

“Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? (Now that is said, of course, very sarcastically, ‘Those few sheep that you take care of in the wilderness.’) I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart; for you have come down in order to see the battle.’ But David said, ‘What have I done now? Was it not just a question?’ Then he turned away from him to another and said the same thing; and the people answered the same thing as before.”

Well word got around that there was a volunteer out there, and even though he was a young fellow, they thought it might be good for him to go and have a little interview with King Saul. “When the words which David spoke were heard, they told them to Saul, and he sent for him. David said to Saul, ‘Let no man's heart fail on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.’” Now, he evidently was a very far less imposing figure than Goliath and all of the Israelites were. Now Saul first rather patronizingly tries to dissuade David from doing this. So evidently David, outwardly at least, did not look like the warrior that he turned out to be. So “Saul said to David, ‘You

are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth.” It’s like one man going out to fight another man in a prize fight who, while he may be a very promising prospect, he’s not the kind of man you put in with someone who’s been fighting for many, many years. But David, of course, has had some experiences that Saul does not understand or doesn’t know anything about, and so he recounts them. And he feels that the past is a clue to the present. So in verse 34 we read,

“But David said to Saul, ‘Your servant was tending his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued it from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him. (That’s quite a feat) Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God.’ And David said, ‘The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.’ And Saul said to David, ‘Go, and may the LORD be with you.’ Then Saul clothed David with his garments and put a bronze helmet on his head, and he clothed him with armor. David girded his sword over his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. So David said to Saul, ‘I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them.’ And David took them off.”

Now there are a couple of very interesting points in this little interview that David had with Saul. And the first is the thing that I mentioned just a minute ago. The past is the clue to the present, and because David’s experience had been such that he had overcome lions and bears, he knew that he had a chance with this Philistine. He knew what God had done in his life in the past, and therefore he had confidence in what the Lord would do in the future. This is one of great sources of encouragement and

consolation and strength for the Christian because it is through the experiences of our Christian life that we face the future in the confidence of what God is able to do for us and through us. That is one of the reasons why it is so important for us, as believers, to have Christian experiences because when we do face the trials of life, it is great to have passed through experiences and have come to know what God can do in the trials of life. The past is a clue to the present, and David's struggles with lions and bears in the past enabled him to approach Goliath with some sense of confidence that God would bring him victorious through this conflict as well.

Now the second lesson that I think is important which is set forth here is that the means by which we do things must be means which are provided us by God. Now when Saul saw that David was going to go out and fight Goliath he clothed David with his own garments and put a bronze helmet on his head and then he put his armor on him. Now Saul was a great big man, and David, evidently was much smaller. Saul was a man who stood head and shoulders above the children of Israel. It is stated earlier. So this was also a large coat of armor that was put on David. I have a Bible teaching friend who said, “David put on Saul's armor and took four steps in it before it moved.” [Laughter] Now the lesson, however that we should learn from this is that we should never fight the Lord's battles in Saul's armor. It is very often the case that Christians seek to rely upon the flesh and upon the strength of human nature when they fight the Lord's battles. But the Lord's battles are not fought with human weapons that are strong and powerful. The Lord's battles are fought by the Holy Spirit. And consequently David, as we know, is going to overcome this giant in spite of his size and his armor by the use of a slingshot and a few pebbles from the brook that was in that ravine in the valley of Elah.

So, he said I haven't tried this armor and he put it aside. He knew what God was able to do for him because he had past experience with the Lord. And he felt that the guidance of God was such that he should not try to do anything with Saul's armor, but he should stick with the things by which God had made him victorious over the lion and the

bear. So I think we have here an extremely important lesson in the things of the Lord. It is important that we do the Lord's work in the Lord's way. That's why it is so important in matters in a local church that we follow the teaching of the word of God that we beware of following the things that the world would have us to follow. We do not need the armor of Saul to do the Lord's work. The Lord's work is done through the preaching of the word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit. And victories, true spiritual victories, are won that simple way.

Now, then our writer goes on to describe the conflict in verse 40 and following. He says,

“He took his stick in his hand and chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in his pouch, and his sling was in his hand; and he approached the Philistine. Then the Philistine came on and approached David, with the shield-bearer in front of him. When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, with a handsome appearance. The Philistine said to David, ‘Am I a dog that you come to me with sticks?’ And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. The Philistine also said to David, ‘Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field.’ Then David said to the Philistine, ‘You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted. This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you.’ (He can talk big too [Laughter]) And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands.’ (You notice it says, ‘The Lord does not deliver by sword or by spear,’ I thought this was a fight between two warriors.) Then it

happened when the Philistine rose and came and drew near to meet David, that David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. (You can see him going down in the ravine and clamoring up the other side in order to get to him) And David put his hand into his bag and took from it a stone and slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the ground. Thus David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and he struck the Philistine and killed him; but there was no sword in David's hand. Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. The men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines as far as the valley, and to the gates of Ekron (which was a Philistine city) And the slain Philistines lay along the way to Shaaraim, even to Gath and Ekron. The sons of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines and plundered their camps.”

Well it was a great victory, but it was a victory by Jehovah through a man. I remember many years ago I was attending a meeting, I think I had been asked to come to this meeting of some corporation in order to either give the invocation or the benediction, I cannot remember which, but nevertheless I was there and they had one of these humorists that businesses like to hire to come and speak to them. And they usually have a canned speech which they deliver all over the country, and it's usually very funny. And I remember this man particularly. His name was Lowie Throckmorton. He began by a long series of stories and jokes which were rather funny, and then of course, the idea behind speeches like this is to wind up with some moral lesson in order that it may give the appearance to the corporation's friends of being a worthwhile meeting. And I can remember him saying, “I'm a believer. I believe in Santa Claus.” I remember that. And then he referred to David and Goliath, and he said that David got the job of killing Goliath because his father knew where he was. He was in the field. And I guess the

lesson, I forgot to write down the lesson, but I think the lesson was a fellow who was out working was more likely to be the one who would be successful.

But the thing I was interested in was his interpretation of the five smooth stones. Interpreters have wondered, “What is the meaning of the five smooth stones?” That never bothered me, but it has bothered some interpreters. And he gave an interpretation which was funny, at least to me, but it was not funny to the crowd. They thought it was pretty good. He said, “The five smooth stones that David picked out of the brook signified kindness, courtesy, tact, the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man.” [Laughter] And these were the stones with which David won his great victory. Others have said, “No the five smooth stones are the five cardinal doctrines of the faith.” And of course the five cardinal doctrines of the faith are those that you think are the five cardinal doctrines of the faith. So far as I know the five smooth stones don't signify anything except that they were not swords, and they were not spears, and it only served to illustrate the fact that this was a surprising and supernatural victory which God himself gave because, in spite of the size, in spite of the terror of the Philistine, in spite of the fact that he had a sword and spear, David, this little shepherd boy with nothing more than a slingshot and a few stones, was able to overcome him through the enabling power of God.

Well in the 54th verse, we have the account of the spoiling of the Philistines, “Then David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his weapons in his tent.” That was one thing that he took and took home, the shield and the armor of Goliath. And in the final few verses of the chapter we read of the inquiry of Saul regarding the parentage of David.

“Now when Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner the commander of the army, ‘Abner, whose son is this young man?’ And Abner said, ‘By your life, O king, I do not know.’ The king said, ‘You inquire whose son the youth is.’ So when David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before

Saul with the Philistine's head in his hand. Saul said to him, ‘Whose son are you, young man?’ And David answered, ‘I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.’”

Now I'd like, in the few moments that we have at the conclusion of our study, to just emphasize a couple of things that I think this account stresses. It seems to me that these lines of truth are emphasized in the account, first of all, the power of faith in action. Now you'll notice that when David went out to meet Goliath, he did not stop when he got out near the great Philistine champion and say, “Now Goliath there is no reason for us to enter into this struggle. Why don't we submit this to binding arbitration?” You can sense in David that there had been an experience of the Lord God and because there had been an experience of the Lord God, he was quite confident that God was directing him in what he was doing, and he, furthermore, expected to win the battle.

And we find illustrated in it the power of faith in action. John writes in the 5th chapter of his 1st epistle, “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith.” Now that I think is one of the great lessons of the Christian life, the power of faith in action. This is one of the things that we as Christians most need to learn, that the struggles of life are, ultimately, won through trust in our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, or in our triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And the Christian believer who, in the midst of the experiences of life, relies upon the power of the triune God will experience the power that David experienced.

Now the second lesson, I think, that stands out in this account, and perhaps the most important lesson, at least as far as I'm concerned, is a lesson that has to do with typology because there can hardly be any question that what we have here is David, perhaps the outstanding type of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, overcoming Goliath who stands as a beautiful example of the evil one, Satan himself. Now David of course, was a type of Christ in his official activity. Now remember he had already been

anointed by Samuel. He was anointed as the coming Messiah. So officially he is a type of Christ.

Someone may say, “Well David was a man who sinned.” That’s true and he is not a type of Christ in his sin. But officially he is a type of Christ because he is a king, and thus he represents the Messianic king who is to come. In fact in the Old Testament the Messianic king who is to come is called, “David” because the term “David” means “beloved.” And our Lord Jesus is the beloved Son of the Father. “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” This is my David, “*Daviyd*,” my beloved one. So David officially is a type of Christ.

Personally he is an example for us. And in the experiences that he has, both good and bad, he is illustrative of spiritual principles. When he overcomes Goliath he is an example for us of faith in action. When he fails because of the lust of the flesh, as he does, he is an example for us negatively, the things that we should avoid in the Christian life. But officially he is a type of Christ.

Now it is in that sense that I want to, just for a few moments, show you how in this account, if you don't already understand this, how in this account we have a beautiful example of the cross work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now let me set forth some of the things that I think will delineate David as a type of Christ. In the first place, David came to this battle from his father’s house with gifts in his hands. That is the way the account opens. David comes with a commission from Jesse in order to benefit the brethren. Now, of course our Lord Jesus is one who, more than once, says that he has come forth from the Father and he is also going back to the Father. He has come to the battle by taking to himself human nature. He has come from the Father’s house and he returns to the Father’s house, and he has gifts in his hands.

Now, secondly, Goliath is his personal antagonist, and Goliath signifies and illustrates that which is opposed to the work of God. He illustrates very beautifully the evil one, or Satan himself. Now, we know in the Bible that the Lord Jesus Christ’s

struggle on Calvary’s cross is more than once related to Satan. In fact the first promise of the gospel is a promise that the seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent. So the fundamental dealing of the cross of Christ is the dealing of the Son of God with Satan. It’s not surprising then in the New Testament that we read verses like this, “And when he (Christ) had disarmed the rulers and authorities, he made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through him.” And then in the 2nd chapter of Hebrews the passage that I read previously, verses 14 and 15, we read,

“Since then children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.”

So, Goliath, then, represents Satan himself, the personal antagonist of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the struggle that they had together illustrates the struggle of the cross of Christ.

Third, David came forward for the struggle after everything else had failed. Goliath had constantly gone out before the armies of Israel, and he had said to them, “Give me a man. I defy the ranks of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together.” No one came. Saul, the captain of the children of Israel, the king, had failed. Israel had failed. Everybody within the nation Israel had failed. There was no one to fight Goliath. God had one individual who would prevail. And he was a lion from the tribe of Judah. He was David himself, not the root of David. But of course, he pictures the Lord Jesus Christ, and it reminds us of Revelation chapter 5 and the picture that is given there of the root of David able to take the book that is in the hand of the person who is seated on the throne and open the seals because he has prevailed by virtue of the blood that was shed on the cross. So he came forward after everyone else had failed. Sin

had immobilized man when the Son of God came. Shuttering, shivering slaves were men because of the fall in the Garden of Eden and the consequent corruption of sin.

Fourth, Israel pictures those for whom the battle was fought. In other words, the one who came forth to win the battle came forth to win the battle for the children of Israel. We read, for example, in chapter 17 and verse 46 that David said, “This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands.” And then in verse 47 he says, “And that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands.” So he speaks in one verse of Goliath being delivered into his hands, and then in the next verse, he speaks of Goliath being delivered into our hands, and so he regards himself as the representative of the children of Israel in this struggle with Goliath. So, our Lord Jesus Christ is the representative of the people of God as on the cross he struggles with Satan and with sin.

Fifth, David's victory was won by an apparently means. We read in verse 40, “He took his stick in his hand and chose for himself five smooth stones.” A stick and five smooth stones, who would have bet any money on David? What would Jimmy the Greek's odds have been that this young man would be able to destroy this giant Goliath? But his victory was not only a victory but it was won with the most foolish of means. Now in the New Testament we read, for example, “The word of the cross is to them that are perishing foolishness.” In fact, the whole Christian revelation is foolishness to the unsaved man. 1 Corinthians chapter 2 and verse 14, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” So David's victory is won by apparently foolish means. It is won by virtue of a stick and some stones.

Now the Lord Jesus Christ's victory over Satan and over sin is won by the shedding of the blood of the cross. And that statement in Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 14 and verse 15 is the anti-type of all that David has accomplished. He, because the children partook of flesh and blood, he also himself partook of the same that through

death he might render powerless him who had the powers of death, that is the devil.

What a foolish means that he should by death overcome the person who had the power of death. As we say, “He, death, by dying, slew.” The means itself is most ridiculous that by dying he should overcome him that had the power of death. But that is precisely what happened. By dying, it is by what seems to be foolish. It is accomplished by virtue of the God-mans shedding his blood. The Roman soldiers rejoicing in what had happened, the Jews rejoicing in it, everybody happy, but God was accomplishing his great victory over sin and over Satan in the foolishness of the cross.

Now, sixth, David, after his victory spoils the giant. We read in verse 54, “Then David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his weapons in his tent.” We read in the New Testament that the Lord Jesus Christ, not only overcame Satan who had the power of death, but also himself by virtue of what he accomplished there gained for himself the keys of Hades and death. He says in the vision of Revelation chapter 1 that he laid right hand upon John and he said, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.” By virtue of what he has done on the cross, he has stripped Satan from the power that God gave him, the power of death, and now the power rests in the hands of our great representative the Lord Jesus who has offered the atoning sacrifice. So the keys of death and Hades are now in his hands, just as David has the head of Goliath and the weapons in his tent.

And finally, Israel enjoys the fruit of David's victory. In verse 51 though verse 53 we read of the way in which they, after Goliath is slain, set out after the Philistines and chase them all the way back to Ekron and then plundered their possessions. In the New Testament we read that we, by virtue of what Christ has done, have become conquerors. In fact, the Bible says in Romans chapter 8 and verse 37 that, “We are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” So by virtue of what Christ has done, we have

become conquerors. Since he as our champion has faced the Philistine champion and won the battle.

Now you can see how David and his struggle with Goliath beautifully portrays the work of our Lord Jesus Christ. I think that's what our Lord meant when he said to the disciples on the Emmaus Road,

“O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have written: Ought not Messiah to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”

In almost all of the pages of the Bible you can see portrayed beforehand the saving work of our great redeemer who is to come.

Well, there were two responses to David's mission. There was of course, the response of Eliab, and that was the response of pride. We don't need you. You're the little fellow that tends those sheep back there. What do we need with you? Reminds us of how when our Lord appeared, they said, “Away with him, away with him. We have no king but Caesar. We don't need any champion like this little boy who's the shepherd boy.”

But on the other hand, there is Jonathan. And Jonathan is a person who was won by the things that he saw in David. We read in the 1st verse in the 18th chapter, “Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself.” So while Eliab may respond negatively to David, there is one who responds positively. From trembling when David arrived, to hopeful when David went forth, to delivered when Goliath was slain, and to enriched when they were able to take the spoils to finally a devoted covenantal relationship to young David. He was a man who was terrified; who became satisfied

with what David had done, and then became captivated with him. David’s work wrought peace in the heart of Jonathan, and as a result a covenant was established between them.

It is a beautiful picture I think of the proper response to the work of our great redeemer. There is only one response really. It’s the response of appreciation and gratitude that leads to the covenantal love relationship. Do you have it? As you are here tonight, do you know our great champion, our great David who has overcome by the shedding of the precious blood? Do you know what it is to have the forgiveness of sins, to have the assurance of life, to know that death has been overcome by virtue of what Christ has done and that you don't really have to fear the future? Have you begun to learn what it is to exercise faith in action in your daily life, and to learn what God can do how he can slay the lions and the bears, enable you to do in the spiritual sphere the things that David was able to do in the physical sphere? Whatever is born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith, the faith that he gives and desires that we practice. May God help us to learn to rest in faith in our great triune God. Whatever the experiences of life are, look at them in the light of the greatness of our great God and what we have in Jesus Christ. Let’s bow in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are thankful to Thee for these lessons that emphasize, again, how important it is that we not fight the Lord’s battles in Saul’s armor. Enable us Lord, to fight the Lord’s battles with the Lord’s means, trust in him. Enable us Lord, to truly realize that the battle is the Lord’s and all the experiences of life are experiences to be faced in the light of that great truth. Enable us in our daily lives to know the victories that come as we rely upon Thee. Give us Lord deeper spiritual experiences. Enable us to make advance in the spiritual life in nineteen hundred and eighty. If it should please Thee, Lord, that we see nineteen hundred and eighty-one, may we see it having advanced in spiritual things. O God, deepen our lives, deepen our love for the word of God, deepen

our love for Jesus Christ. Give us great motivation to learn of him. Bless the assembly, its leadership, the ministry of the word of God, the fellowship that we have in Christ. For Jesus' sake. Amen.