

It was an exciting place to be. DAVID ran up the battle line looking for his brothers. Just as he found them, there was a great shout from the other side of the valley. It was GOLIATH.

GOLIATH was a PHILISTINE soldier. GOLIATH was about three metres tall. GOLIATH wore a bronze helmet and bronze armour. GOLIATH had a bronze sword strapped to his back and a bronze spear in his hand. A soldier walked in front of GOLIATH, carrying his shield.

‘Why are you ISRAELITES lining up for battle?’ he shouted. ‘I’m the best soldier in the PHILISTINE army. Choose your best soldier to come out and fight me. If he kills me, our people will be your slaves. But if I kill him, you will be our slaves.’

King SAUL and his men heard this shout every morning. They were terrified.

DAVID spoke to some soldiers.

‘What will a man get for killing this PHILISTINE?’ he asked.

‘King SAUL is offering a big reward,’ said the ISRAELITE soldiers. ‘The man who kills GOLIATH will marry King SAUL’S daughter and never have to pay any more taxes.’

The king heard about DAVID’S questions and sent for him.

‘Your majesty,’ said DAVID, ‘this PHILISTINE shouldn’t turn us into cowards. I’ll go out and fight him myself.’

‘You don’t stand a chance,’ said King SAUL. ‘You’re only a boy. GOLIATH has been a soldier all his life.’

‘I take care of my father’s sheep,’ said DAVID. ‘When a lion or a bear takes a sheep, I go after it and kill it. I can kill this worthless PHILISTINE. The Lord has kept me safe from lions and bears and he will keep me safe from GOLIATH.’

The king still looked rather doubtful but nobody else in the ISRAELITE army had volunteered.

‘Go ahead and fight him,’ said King SAUL, ‘and may God go with you.’

King SAUL gave DAVID his own personal armour, his helmet and his sword. DAVID put it all on and then found that he had a problem.

‘I can’t move with all this on,’ he said. ‘I’m not used to it.’

DAVID took off the armour and then walked down the side of the valley to a small stream. Very carefully he chose five stones. Then, with his sling in one hand and his shepherd’s stick in the other, he started to walk towards GOLIATH.

To say the least, the giant was not impressed. Once more a shout echoed around the hills.

‘Come on!’ roared GOLIATH. ‘When I’m finished with you, I’ll feed you to the wild animals!’

The ISRAELITE army looked on, terrified. The PHILISTINE soldiers cheered loudly.

‘I don’t think I can look,’ said King SAUL.

DAVID crossed the flat valley bottom and started to climb the side of the valley towards GOLIATH.

‘You come against me,’ he said, in a voice that could be heard by the soldiers in both camps, ‘with a sword and spear. I come to fight you in the name of the Lord All-Powerful. He is the God of ISRAEL’S army. Today the Lord will help me defeat you. Then the whole world will know that ISRAEL has a real God.’

By this time, GOLIATH was quivering with





anger. The valley trembled as he thundered down towards DAVID. The shepherd boy and the giant were on a collision course. There could be only one winner!

DAVID felt the stones he had chosen from the stream. One was perfect. With the stone in his sling, he whirled it round and round. As he let go of one end, the stone sped like a bullet towards

GOLIATH. It landed with deadly accuracy in the middle of the giant's forehead. GOLIATH fell to the ground with an earth-shaking thud.

The PHILISTINES turned and ran. The ISRAELITES cheered their new hero and chased after the fleeing PHILISTINES.

When it was all over, King SAUL demanded to see DAVID.

'Who are you?' asked the king.

'I am DAVID, the son of Jesse, a loyal ISRAELITE from Bethlehem,' came the reply.

From that moment onward, King SAUL knew very well who DAVID was. Their paths were to cross many times.

HHHHH **PRAYER** HHHHH

Loving God, just as David didn't turn and run from what faced him, give us courage and common sense when we have to sort out giant problems. Help us to know that you are with us in all we do. Amen



