

THE BIBLE IN ONE YEAR



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GOD HELPS DAVID DEFEAT GOLIATH

1 SAMUEL 17:1-51

GOD HELPS DAVID DEFEAT GOLIATH

Today we're going to learn that God is on our side. But sometimes, our side feels pretty unfair. Think about a time you felt like people were against you.

As we learn our true Bible story, we'll need a balance to see how fairly the two sides balanced out.

First you will need:

- 1 plastic hanger
- 2 pieces of 28-inch length yarn
- 2 16 ounce paper cups
- Permanent markers
- Scissors
- Hole puncher
- Tape
- 7 pennies
- Cotton ball
- 1 rock



Instructions:

1. Punch two holes at the top of each cup. The holes should be across from one another.
2. Thread a 28-inch piece of yarn through the holes in each cup and then pull the ends up about 12 inches above the cups. Tie the ends together over the arms of the hanger, one cup on each side.
3. Get a second person to hold the hanger on a finger, slide the cups as needed so that the balance is level and then tape the yarn in place.
4. Write "Israelites" on one cup and "Philistines" on the other or just "I" and "P".
5. Have seven pennies and a cotton ball ready.

Use the Balance

In today's Bible story, there was a battle going on!

1 Samuel 17:1-3

¹The Philistines now mustered their army for battle and camped between Socoh in Judah and Azekah at Ephes-dammim. ²Saul countered by gathering his Israelite troops near the valley of Elah. ³So the Philistines and Israelites faced each other on opposite hills, with the valley between them.

As I read about the two sides, the Israelites and Philistines, listen for how one side had an advantage over the other. When you read an advantage, you'll put a penny in that side's cup. Remember, a balance shows which side is stronger by the cup that's **lower**, not higher. So whichever cup is lower is the one that's winning the battle.

1 Samuel 17:4-11

⁴Then Goliath, a Philistine champion from Gath, came out of the Philistine ranks to face the forces of Israel. He was over nine feet tall! ⁵He wore a bronze helmet, and his bronze coat of mail weighed 125 pounds. ⁶He also wore bronze leg armor, and he carried a bronze javelin on his shoulder. ⁷The shaft of his spear was as heavy and thick as a weaver's beam, tipped with an iron spearhead that weighed 15 pounds. His armor bearer walked ahead of him carrying a shield.

⁸Goliath stood and shouted a taunt across to the Israelites. "Why are you all coming out to fight?" he called. "I am the Philistine champion, but you are only the servants of Saul. Choose one man to come down here and fight me! ⁹If he kills me, then we will be your slaves. But if I kill him, you will be our slaves! ¹⁰I defy the armies of Israel today! Send me a man who will fight me!" ¹¹When Saul and the Israelites heard this, they were terrified and deeply shaken.



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Why does this battle seem so unbalanced? Would **you** be willing to fight Goliath all alone? Why or why not? In the Bible, an Israelite boy named David took lunch to his brothers, who were fighting in the battle. David was the youngest brother and was normally in charge of watching the sheep.

When David got to the battlefield, he heard Goliath's challenge. This is how the Israelites responded.

1 Samuel 17:24-25

²⁴As soon as the Israelite army saw him, they began to run away in fright. ²⁵"Have you seen the giant?" the men asked. "He comes out each day to defy Israel. The king has offered a huge reward to anyone who kills him. He will give that man one of his daughters for a wife, and the man's entire family will be exempted from paying taxes!"

Put another penny in the Philistine cup.

Most of the Israelites saw this unbalanced battle and got really scared. But David wanted to know more. Then he said this.

1 Samuel 17:32

³²"Don't worry about this Philistine," David told Saul. "I'll go fight him!"

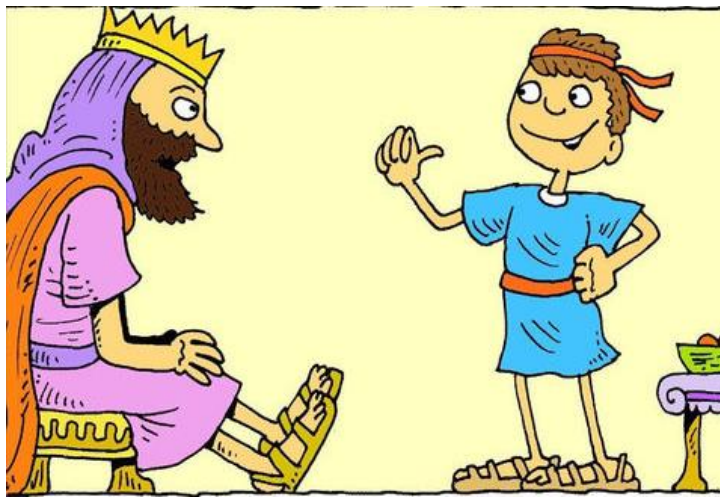


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Put a cotton ball in the Israelite cup.

David was just a young shepherd! Even King Saul didn't think he could balance out the battle.

1 Samuel 17:33

³³*“Don’t be ridiculous!” Saul replied. “There’s no way you can fight this Philistine and possibly win! You’re only a boy, and he’s been a man of war since his youth.”*

David insisted, so King Saul gave David some armor to wear.

1 Samuel 17:38

³⁸*Then Saul gave David his own armor—a bronze helmet and a coat of mail.*

Put a penny in the Israelite cup.

How do you think that armor would help you fight in a battle? David didn’t think his armor was very comfortable, either.

1 Samuel 17:39

³⁹*David put it on, strapped the sword over it, and took a step or two to see what it was like, for he had never worn such things before.*

“I can’t go in these,” he protested to Saul. “I’m not used to them.” So David took them off again.



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Have kids remove the penny from the Israelite cup.

Instead, David took just his slingshot and five smooth stones from a stream. Then he approached Goliath. Let’s read what happened next.

1 Samuel 17:41-44

⁴¹ Goliath walked out toward David with his shield bearer ahead of him, ⁴² sneering in contempt at this ruddy-faced boy. ⁴³ "Am I a dog," he roared at David, "that you come at me with a stick?" And he cursed David by the names of his gods. ⁴⁴ "Come over here, and I'll give your flesh to the birds and wild animals!" Goliath yelled.

Goliath still saw this as an unbalanced battle...in his favor. After all, look at your balance! The Israelites are losing big time! But David had a secret weapon on his side. He knew God is on our side. So here's what he said.

1 Samuel 17:45.

⁴⁵ David replied to the Philistine, "You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of Heaven's Armies—the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

Put a rock in the Israelite cup.

When God is on our side, we've got an unbalanced battle...in **our** favor! God could easily defeat Goliath—even though he was huge and had all that armor. Here's what happened next.

1 Samuel 17:48-50

⁴⁸ As Goliath moved closer to attack, David quickly ran out to meet him. ⁴⁹ Reaching into his shepherd's bag and taking out a stone, he hurled it with his sling and hit the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank in, and Goliath stumbled and fell face down on the ground.

⁵⁰ So David triumphed over the Philistine with only a sling and a stone, for he had no sword.

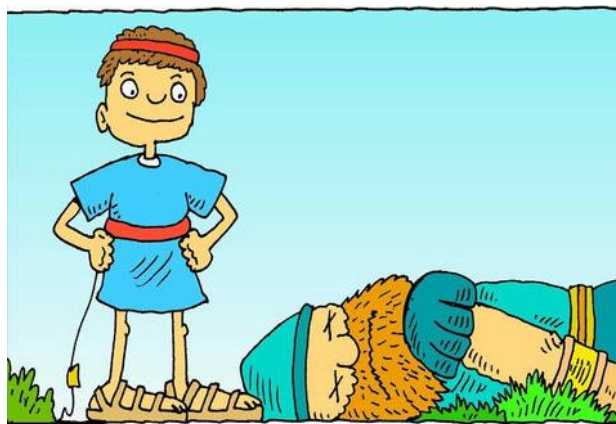


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How can you tell God was on David's side? How do you know God is on your side? God was on David's side because David believed in God and had faith that God could beat the giant. God is on our side when we believe in him and have a friendship with him.

