

**“Battling the Giants” by Daniel H. Kuhn, Jr.** 03060625

**1 Samuel 17:1, 4-11, 41-49**

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Here are some quick notes about an old familiar story. First, I like the way the Philistines did battle. It was psychological, but it also saved lives. Only the best fighter from each side would fight. That would save many from slaughter. Perhaps we should fight battles that way today. Just send the biggest and best fighter from each side and see who wins. Or, our generals could play “Rock, Scissors, Paper” against each other. This would save lots of money in weapons development!

Second, David was either very courageous or he was very stupid. Perhaps it was a reflection of his youth that he challenged the giant. He was brash and overconfident. He was living proof that in young people, the hypothalamus gland is not developed enough to give an individual good sense. Or, his brashness was a reflection of his faith. He knew that God would be with him. He believed that God had saved him in the past and that God would save him now, because he was doing God’s will.

Third, David won the battle not simply by brute strength, but by skill.

Fourth, I’m for trying to see what avenues there are to solving problems other than through violence. Can we try understanding the other side? What are the needs of the other? Can you state the position of the opponent in a way that they would state it? Can we try negotiation? Are there compromises that can bring both parties to a middle ground?

Violence only proves which party is bigger, not which party is right. There is controversy surrounding the issue of child spanking. Research indicates that spanking only teaches physical violence. When a three-year old girl was asked why she was hitting her one-year-old brother, she answered, “I’m playing mommy!”

What are the giants you face in life? Let’s look at them as “giants” and not as the “enemy.” Often, what we considered to be an enemy turned out to be a friend because it helped us to grow in ways that we never would have thought possible.

We might face personal giants. Perhaps they are related to a job, such as the way you or your co-workers are being treated or a loss of a job. Or, we might be facing an illness. Perhaps we are trying to find a partner who is honest and caring and faithful, or we might be facing death itself.

We might face the giants of our culture, like racism and discrimination or destructive partisan politics, or big oil companies, or the entertainment industry. A giant of our culture is advertising that manufactures un-needed needs.

When David went to battle Goliath, he reached down and picked up five smooth stones. I offer you five smooth stones we can pick up in our struggles against giants.

The first stone is, identify the problem. David heard the Giant taunting the Israelites. He saw how tall the giant was and what armor he had. He noticed the weak point in the armor. What is the size and shape of the giant you are facing? Who stands with you? Who are your allies? Do you know where the battle lines are drawn?

The second stone is courage. David, in his brash youthfulness, walked right up to Goliath and looked him in the eye. Stand up to the problem. You will never overcome it by running away or hoping the giant will slink off.

The third stone is skill. David had practiced with a sling. He knew he was accurate. What are the skills you need to confidently face your problem? What resources are there for sharpening

those skills? Would it help to go to night classes to learn more about what you need? Is there training offered in your work place that would help you? Perhaps you know the answer for the man in Manhattan who asked, “How do you get to Carnegie Hall?”

The woman said, “Practice, practice, practice.” Practice the skills you need to overcome the giant.

The fourth stone is confidence. Know whose side you are on. If you truly know that you are on God’s side, then go into battle with the knowledge that you are doing God’s will. Confidence is faith— faith in yourself and faith in God.

The fifth stone is prayer. Prayer gets you into touch with your spiritual depth. It grounds you. It connects you with that which is eternal. It gives a more inclusive perspective on things. It helps you keep your priorities straight.

You and God can overcome the giants. These five stones are all you need to face the giants in your life.