

To the Saints of God at Topeka, Kansas

October 7, 2018

David and Goliath, Part 3 - Goliath – Man of the Flesh (Part 1)

1st Samuel 17:1 *Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephesdammim. 2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines. 3 And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and there was a valley between them. 4 And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. 5 And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. 6 And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. 7 And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him. 8 And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. 9 If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye 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 those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.*

Map 1 – Israel in the Days of King Saul



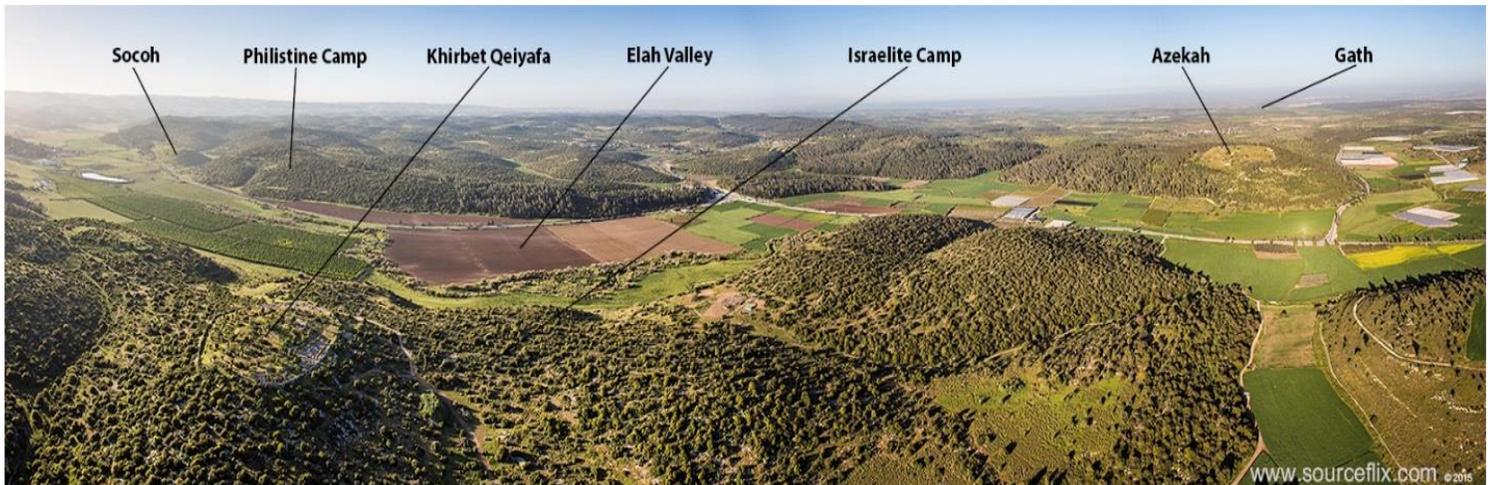
Map 2



Map 3



Map 4



1st Samuel 17:1 *Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephesdammim. 2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines. 3 And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and there was a valley between them.*

It takes four maps to explain 1 Samuel 17:1-4 well. As I mentioned previously the Philistines were a sea-faring people that moved from the Island of Crete to the Mediterranean coast near Gaza and to the plains toward Hebron and Jerusalem (see Map 1). *Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which belongeth to Judah.* The Philistines gathered together their armies to battle because they were avenging themselves for two reasons:

1) Jonathan and his armorbearer attacked a garrison of the Philistines (1 Sam 14:4) when he said to his armorbearer at 1 Sam 14:6 *Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few....*11 *And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines: and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves... 13 And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armourbearer after him: and they fell before Jonathan; and his armourbearer slew after him. 14 And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armourbearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow.*

And, 2) 1 Sam 14: 20 *And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle (the field of battle with the Philistines): and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow (ala Gideon!), and there was a very great discomfiture... 22 Likewise all the men of Israel which had hid themselves in mount Ephraim, when they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle... 31 And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon: and the people were very faint.*

Another reason the expositors say the Philistines attacked now is because they heard of the falling out between King Saul and Samuel and because Saul was in a bad way – (an evil spirit of the Lord was upon him) and they wanted to take advantage of these things.

The Philistines at this time were not used to losing to Israel – at times Israel had been in bondage to the Philistines for many years. And you may recall that at this exact time, there was no blacksmith found in Israel and only Saul and Jonathan had swords or spears! (1 Sam 13:19-23). Who wouldn't want to fight an army that had no modern weapons. So, that is why the Philistines are moving against Israel – they have a score to settle and the timing seemed right.

There is one more interesting question here as we open 1st Samuel 17 and the story of David and Goliath. Why didn't Jonathan fight Goliath? Clearly this is a valiant and I believe Godly man. 1 Sam 14:6 *Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few.* He attacked a Philistine garrison with only him and his armourbearer. I surmise that there are several reasons: 1) I don't believe Saul would have let him (when he attacked the garrison, Jonathan didn't tell him) and Saul wouldn't have wanted to risk the heir to the throne; 2) God appointed David to do it (probably as a type of Christ delivering His people) and 3) it is David's slaying of Goliath, that knit's Jonathan's soul to him. Interestingly, in 1 Sam 17:57-58 Abner takes David to Saul, with Goliath's big head still in David's hand and Saul asks David who he is and David tells him and the chapter ends and in 1 Sam 18:1 *And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.*

Matthew Henry: ... *David expressed himself with so much prudence, modesty, and piety, such a felicity of expression, with so much boldness and yet so much sweetness, and all this so natural and unaffected, and the more surprising because of the disadvantages of his education and appearance, that the soul of Jonathan was immediately knit unto the soul of David. Jonathan had formerly set upon a Philistine army with the same faith and bravery with which David had now attacked a Philistine giant; so that there was between them a very near resemblance of affections, dispositions, and counsels, which made their spirits unite so easily, so*

quickly, so closely, that they seemed but as one soul in two bodies. None had so much reason to dislike David as Jonathan had, because he was to put him by the crown, yet none regards him more. Those that are governed in their love by principles of wisdom and grace will not suffer their affections to be alienated by any secular regards or considerations: the greater thoughts will swallow up and overrule the less.

4) Even this valiant man Jonathan, could have been enormously intimidated by this 11-foot-tall giant. You cannot get a proper understanding of the girth of this giant without careful consideration. We will talk more about that in a moment.

1st Samuel 17:1 Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephesdammim. 2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines. 3 And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and there was a valley between them.

So, the Philistines were gathered together at Shochoh, which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephesdammim. You can see in Map 3 Shochoh and Azekah. You can also see it in Map 1, but I think they have Shochoh on the wrong side of the border. They have it in Philistia and 1 Sam 17:1 clearly says it belonged to Judah. That border likely changed from time to time as the Lord required. Nonetheless you can see this is near the Philistia/Israel border. And Saul and the men of Israel pitched by the valley of Elah. And the Philistines stood on a mountain on one side and the Israelites stood on the mountain of the other and there was a valley between them. Map 4 is really the best map, you can clearly see all of the players and how the terrain lines out.

You can see from Map 2 that the terrain starts flat at the Mediterranean Sea and by the time you get to Jerusalem and Hebron it is mountainous. The Valley of Elah where the battle of David and Goliath takes place is the middle ground called the Shephelah (see Map 2). This is a series of hills, ridges and valleys that connect the plains to the mountains. There is a lot of strategic importance here and many battles have been fought in these valleys because they offer a clear path to Hebron, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. For example, it is said in the 12th Century AD the Muslim

general Saladin fought the Knights of the Crusaders in this very valley for the control of Jerusalem. This may or may not be true, but the rationale is well thought out. If you have never seen the movie *The Kingdom of Heaven*, you should. If you ever want to know why the Palestinians claim Jerusalem as their capital also (along with Israel) this movie will explain it.

There is some speculation that what the Philistines were trying to do is to split Israel in two, around Bethlehem/Jerusalem (see Map 1). That does make some military sense because if they could do that and hold it – it creates all kinds of logistical, supply lines, and trade problems for the Israelites. So, Saul moves his army down to protect this region and stop this assault before it gets too much strength behind it. So, why didn't the armies just openly have an all-out assault on one another. Well, if you stay on the ridge then the other army has to come down their ridge, cross the valley (which exposes them to the archers) and then climb up the ridge on the other side to attack your enemy (while giving up the high ground to the enemy). No smart army, ideally, wants to do that. This would be like Pickett's charge at the Battle of Gettysburg in the Civil War. If you have ever been there you know that Pickett and his men had to openly expose themselves to the Union army in an open field while the Union army was on a ridge and fired down at them. It was a slaughter. By the time Pickett and his men made it across the open field to the ridge where the Union army was, they were largely dead. Pickett and the South were forced to make this desperate move because they were far from their supply lines and their men were starving. They had no choice but to attack, they couldn't wait for better battle positions.

That is why the Philistines sent Goliath down to end the stalemate. In verse 2 *And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines* – Gill says *set the battle in array against the Philistines* means they *prepared to give them battle*. Gill implies that there were no significant battles between the Israelites and the Philistines before David fought Goliath. Which makes good sense, and fits with the text.

1st Sam. 17:4 *And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.*

So, this is the first mention of Goliath in the Bible and he is mentioned as a “champion.” The word in Strong’s means “a man of the space between two armies.” He is an “arbiter” of sorts or a “dueler.” This is potentially one of his specialties – to fight the best soldier from the opposing side as a way to decide the battle. Goliath is from Gath and as you may recall this is one of the places where the giants were not destroyed. Joshua 11:21 *And at that time came Joshua, and cut off the Anakims from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel: Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities. 22 There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained.* And do not think that Goliath missed the fact that it was the Israelites that destroyed the giants from all those other cities and places I just mentioned. You can bet his dad raised him on a solid diet of exactly who destroyed the giants and why their numbers were dwindling (Read: much whining about the lack of respect for their diversity.). Goliath would have been a motivated giant and would have relished the opportunity to dispense some justice and revenge on the Israelites. I believe that is a factor in Goliath’s taunts. As I mentioned in a previous sermon, Goliath was most likely 11’ feet tall. Beloved I know of really only one giant, and that is Andre the Giant. I never met Andre the Giant, but when I was a kid he came to wrestle in Topeka once and I really wanted to go. Gill says Goliath was 11’ tall. Andre the Giant was 7’ 4” and weighed 500 pounds. If you do the math and keep the proportions the same, Goliath would have weighed about 800 pounds. You would have to add another 3 feet, 8 inches to Andre to get him close to what Goliath was. I never understood how big this giant really was. Eleven feet tall is absolutely massive. If you go to the patio outside the sign-shop door, from the brick to the ceiling is exactly 11 feet. I suggest you go out and evaluate that for yourself. We have no person that compares to that in the earth today.

Don’t lose sight of the fact that when you have a giant that looks like Goliath, it is just what the flesh likes to trust in. We are instructed against looking through that lens, and instead to lean upon the Lord our God. That is our strength.

Jer 17:5 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

2Ch 32:8 With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.



5 And he had a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass.

Goliath was well-armed. The text says he had a helmet of brass. A helmet is standard issue for most soldiers, even today. It is defensive armor. It probably would have been leather on the inside and the text says it was coated with brass on the outside. This is an important part of Goliath's gear. Giants of course have big giant heads which make for big giant targets, so a full helmet to protect him would have been important. It does not say how heavy the helmet, but it

would have been substantial.



Goliath also had a coat of mail. This would have been the equivalent of body armor today or a bullet proof vest as it were. The words translated “coat of mail” literally mean “breastplate of scale.” It was a coat of metal/brass armor that went from the neck and covered the breast and back. It probably consisted of various plates of brass laid on top of each other, like fish scales, so no arrow could pierce between it. I believe there were various types of mail, some being lighter and some being heavier. This would have been heavy armor/mail because it says it weighed 5,000 shekels or about 156 pounds. That means that coat of mail weighed as much as me! According to Gill, the Greeks and Romans both used brass for helmets, mail, shields and weapons. The mail I am wearing in the photo is aluminum, weighing 15 pounds. Steel mail would have made

that same piece weigh 30 pounds.

The Lord willing, we will look at the rest of this part of the discussion about David and Goliath, the man of the flesh next week. I’m thankful to have the opportunity to look into these things that the Lord has left us in His word.

I love you all. Amen.