

## David and Goliath

### Introduction

Talk about size: big and small and comparison: big, biggest, huge, etc. Have a series of objects to arrange in size order. Do this with three of the characters from the story (David, a soldier, Goliath) but do not use their names, just arrange the people anonymously. Goliath was about 9 feet. The tallest man in the world at the moment is 8 feet 5 inches. Goliath was a very big man, not a 'giant' of fairy tales. Explain that today's story is about a very big person - a gigantic man - and a smaller person. (The word giant is used in the story but in the sense of a gigantic man.) Talk also about problems and worries. Sometimes a problem can feel 'gigantic'. This story is about a man who was not only big but also a gigantic problem.

### Core material

The biblical story can be used here or after the shoebox story. Pupils can put the two together and discuss how they relate and whether the shoebox story reflects the meaning of the Bible story.

#### Biblical material: 1 Samuel 17:1- 49 (adapted)

David was a shepherd boy who lived in the country of Israel. He spent his time looking after sheep, keeping them safe from wild animals such as bears and lions. He used his sling and his stick to keep the sheep safe. Alone on the hills he made up songs and sang them. His songs were about his life and his friendship with God.

David's older brothers had joined the army because an enemy had attacked their land. In the enemy army was a gigantic soldier called Goliath. Every day he shouted a challenge to the Israelite army, 'Who will fight me? Which soldier is brave enough? If I win you will be our slaves. If your soldier wins we will be your slaves.'

All the soldiers of Israel heard the shouting but they were so afraid that no one would fight Goliath, he was just too big. David went to visit his brothers at the army camp and took them some food. While he was there he heard Goliath shouting and saw how afraid everyone was. 'This is not right,' thought David, 'why should my people live in fear? I must stop him.' David went to the King and said he would fight Goliath. At first they laughed at him but they saw he was serious. 'I have fought lions and bears while looking after my sheep,' said David, 'I have become very good with my sling.'

David went to fight Goliath, but Goliath just laughed when he saw David who was only a boy armed with a stick and sling. David carried on walking, getting closer to Goliath. 'You come at me trusting in weapons,' David called, 'I come to you in the name of God.'

This angered Goliath and he moved forward to attack. David picked up a stone, placed it in his sling and swung it. The stone hit Goliath on the head and he fell. The battle was over. Goliath was dead. The people were safe.

The shoebox story of David and Goliath



You will need

- A shoebox covered in suitable wrapping paper and a ribbon
- A piece of green cloth or paper (crepe paper works well)
- Small pieces of screwed up newspaper to make hills
- Screwed up green tissue for trees
- Tissue paper rolled to form a small 'stone'
- 9 people e.g. Duplo. One should be bigger than the others. One should be smaller
- Sheep, lion and bear from class animal sets or the ones provided on **Animals**
- Script for the story

Opening the box

Ask pupils to guess what sort of story might be in the shoe box. A pupil can undo the ribbon.

The teacher takes out the items one at a time in response to the pupils' question 'What's in the box?'

As they are taken out the items are laid ready for storytelling.

PUPILS

'What's in the box?'

TEACHER

There is green in my box that makes valleys and hills.

There are trees that dot the land.

There are sheep who graze on the hills.

There is a shepherd who looks after the sheep.

There is a bear and lion who frighten the sheep.

There is a giant soldier and his army. (4 people)

There is a frightened army who face the giant. (4 people)

There is pride in the box; you cannot see it but it is here. (Lift out invisible pride)

There is trust in the box; you cannot see it but it is here. (Lift out invisible trust)

There is a stone in the box – I wonder what part it plays?

There's a story in the box.



Place the cloth/paper as indicated in the scripts and add the items as the story unfolds. Pupils can join in actions and sounds as appropriate.

## The story script

Our story takes place on a green cloth that forms valleys and hills.

Trees dot the landscape.

Sheep dot the hills.

The enemy gathered, forming battle lines.

The people faced them.

On nearby hills sheep quietly grazed.

The shepherd watched them.

A soldier stepped forward,  
a giant man, head and shoulders above the rest.

The shepherd stepped softly, round his sheep,  
just a boy, head and shoulders below the rest.

The giant stood as tall as a bear.

The people ran, hiding away in their fear.

Out on the hills a bear reared, claws  
outstretched.

The sheep ran  
but the shepherd stayed and fought.

The giant roared his challenge:  
'Fight or die!'

The people ran from the danger.

The lion roared its warning

But the shepherd faced the danger.

Day after day, day after day, the shepherd  
cared for his sheep.

Day after day, day after day, the giant roared  
his challenge.

The shepherd heard the giant's challenge and  
turned to face a new danger.

He had faced the claws of the bear,  
he had faced the roar of lions.

With God's help he would face this giant.

*Place cloth, place newspaper underneath to  
make hills in one corner*

*Add trees to flatter parts*

*Add sheep on hills*

*Add Goliath and 3 soldiers away from sheep*

*Add Israelite army (4) facing them*

*Move sheep about*

*Move shepherd*

*Move giant forward a little*

*Indicate size with hands*

*Move shepherd*

*Indicate size with hands*

*Use hands for size*

*Hide Israelite army behind trees*

*Place bear, grawl, stretch claws*

*Move sheep*

*Move shepherd to bear - move bear off*

*Thump fist into palm for this*

*Move the Israelites further away*

*Place lion, roar 'I will kill.'*

*Move shepherd to lion, move lion off*

*Move shepherd among the sheep*

*Move the giant up and down the battle line*

*Turn shepherd to face giant from a distance*

*Lift bear – pupils grawl and stretch claws*

*Lift lion, pupils roar*

*Sign for God (one finger points up)*

Giant and boy stood face to face;  
The giant stood armed in his pride,  
The boy stood armed with his trust in God  
and his sling.

'Pride goes before a fall.'

It only took one stone  
and trust learned on the hills  
among the sheep.

'How the mighty are fallen.'

*Move shepherd to face giant*

*Add invisible pride*

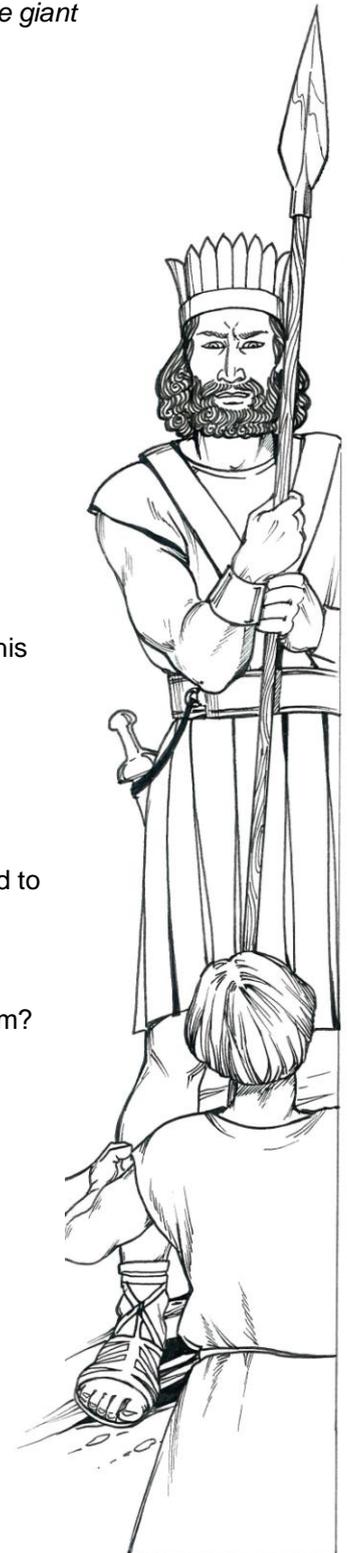
*Add invisible trust*

*Knock Goliath over*

*Add small 'stone'*

## Conversation

- What is unusual, interesting or puzzling about this story?
- Why do you think giant-man was proud?
- How did being a shepherd boy train the shepherd to fight the giant?
- How did the shepherd boy's trust in God help him?
- What would you say this story is all about?



## Select from the following activities:

Please see the pastoral note in the teachers' notes about throwing stones.

### 1. Make a three dimensional display

Make a three dimensional display of the story with the characters identified. Add captions and pupil comments and responses. Make sure everything is child-safe.

### 2. Explore the Bible phrases

There are two sayings from the Bible in this script: 'Pride goes before a fall' (Proverbs 16:18) and 'How the mighty are fallen' (2 Samuel 1:27). Write some sentences containing these phrases. Add to the display. Create role-plays that demonstrate the meaning of these phrases. Discuss different types of pride. David was rightly proud of his skill with a sling but he was not arrogant.

'Pride goes before a fall' comes from the biblical book of Proverbs, which contains advice for wise living. This is the observation that people who are very boastful and full of themselves are likely to make a mistake that dents their pride.

'How the mighty are fallen' is part of King David's lament for King Saul and his son Jonathan, both great warriors, who were killed in battle. It has come to be used when

any person who was doing well suffers a reversal of fortune, for example, when a well-known football team drops out of the premier league.

### 3. Replay the story/photostory

Replay the story and take photographs of particular moments. Create a photostory using the computer and ask pupils to add speech bubbles, thought bubbles, feelings and commentary. Bring out the twin emphases of trust and pride in the story.

### 4. Explore trust and pride

Explore the two invisible ingredients: trust and pride. Goliath trusted in his weapons. David trusted God but still used a weapon. Goliath had a boastful sort of pride. David was proud of his skill with a sling but not arrogant. What is a right sort of pride? Ask pupils to create two scenarios, one to demonstrate boastful pride and one to demonstrate a right type of pride. Believers try to trust God and follow his way of living. They believe that God loves people and has their good at heart. That does not mean everything goes right all the time or that good always wins in the short term, but Christians believe that in the long term they can trust that God will bring about the triumph of good. Explore people in whom we trust and what qualities we should look for in such people.

## Reflection

Have three boxes, one small, and one large, one huge. Put the small box next to the large one. Explain that the large box looks big next to the small one. But if you place the huge box next to the large one, the large one does not look so large. David kept his mind on God and that shrunk the problem of Goliath down to size, for Christians believe that God is bigger than any problem and they talk to God about their problems and worries. You might want to talk about handling problems and how sometimes they can seem gigantic and get out of perspective. Discuss talking to people you trust.

