

**November 27, 2016 Out of options—David**

**Advent One—1 Samuel 17:1-11**

*Among the Philistine ranks was a remarkable soldier named Goliath, a name of possibly Hittite or Lydian origin. He was a “man between the two” (NIV, “champion”). This phrase, used only here in the Old Testament, apparently refers to an individual who fought to the death in representative combat with an opponent from a foreign army. One-on-one combat as a substitute for combat between two full armies apparently was not regularly practiced in Semitic societies; it probably was more commonly employed by the Philistines - R. deVaux (1971).*

Goliath educated them concerning the practice of representative combat. The concept was simple: a soldier chosen from the Israelite ranks was to fight to the death with Goliath. The results of the high-stakes contest were also clear-cut: the nation represented by the dead soldier would become subject to the nation represented by the victor. The fact that Goliath is recorded as explaining the practice to the Israelites suggests they had not previously participated in a contest like this; the fact that the Philistines later reneged on the agreement (18:30) suggests representative combat was not taken seriously even by those who advocated it.

*This passage presents the longest description of military attire in the Old Testament. Goliath’s physical stature, armor, weaponry, and shield bearer must have made him appear invincible. However, the reader has just been warned against paying undue attention to outward appearances. The detailed description of Goliath’s external advantages here suggests that chapter 17 was intended in part to serve as an object lesson in the theology of the previous chapter - Bergen, R. D. (1996).*

**Next week:** The season of Advent continues. **Isaiah 35:1-10**

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# THE STORY

FINDING YOUR STORY IN GOD'S STORY

Why did the Army of Israel remain, if not to fight?

David's appearance was not striking.

Goliath's appearance was extraordinary.

Goliath's taunts brought shame on Israel.

David cared about Israel's honor.

His greater concern was honoring the living God.

The Army of Israel had only one chance.

No soldier in the army was willing to fight Goliath.

David had experienced God's help in the past.

David trusted God to rescue him.

Israel needed a representative to deliver them.

We need a Representative to save us too.

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