

An article for children

A Small Giant and A Big God

Have you ever seen an anthill? It's a tiny mound of dirt around a hole in the ground where a colony of ants live. I said it was a tiny mound of dirt because that's how it looks to me—tiny. But if I were an ant, do you think that mound of dirt would look tiny? I can imagine a tired ant coming home from a picnic and thinking, "Oh my, what a giant hill I have to climb to get home!"

The difference in how I see the anthill and how an ant sees it is called *perspective*. That's a very important word to learn. Let me tell you a Bible story that shows how having the right perspective can help you make the right decisions—decisions that honor God.

A long time ago, Israel's army was lined up for battle against the Philistine army. You need to understand that this wasn't an unusual event. The Philistines were the archenemies of God's chosen people, Israel, and their armies were always fighting. This time, the armies were camped on the sides of two mountains, with a valley in between. Israel's soldiers were on one side, and the Philistine soldiers were on the other. They were watching each other closely to see who would make the first move.

Every day for forty days, one of the Philistine warriors came out of his camp and shouted across to Israel's warriors. He challenged them to send one of their men over for a battle. He said that if the Israelite warrior won the battle, the Philistines would be their servants. But if the Philistine warrior won the battle, then Israel would serve them. That sounds like a pretty good idea, doesn't it? Instead of having all the army fight and many men killed or wounded, just two men could do battle.

Israel's army didn't think it was a good idea at all! All they could see was the particular warrior who shouted across the valley to them, and he was a very scary guy. His name was Goliath, and the Bible says he stood nine feet, nine inches tall. That's only a few inches shorter than the rim on a basketball goal! And it's not that he was a tall, skinny weakling, either. Goliath had been a warrior from his youth, so we know he was a strong, skilled fighter. He wore a bronze helmet to protect his head (which no one could reach anyway) and a coat made of metal rings to protect his body. He wore a covering on his legs made of bronze and carried a sword, a javelin and a spear. All this gear probably weighed more than your dad does—at least 200 pounds! None of Israel's warriors wanted to fight Goliath, not even when King Saul offered them fabulous rewards.

Remember when we talked about perspective? All that Israel's soldiers could see was big, strong Goliath.



While the army was away from Israel, the people back home thought of them often. One man named Jesse wanted to make sure his sons had enough to eat and to hear news about how they were doing. He sent his youngest son, David (who had stayed behind to watch the family sheep), to take food to the camp and check on his brothers. David arrived just as Goliath shouted across the valley.

David was surprised to see Israel's warriors back away from Goliath in fear. When David looked at Goliath, he didn't just see how big Goliath was. His perspective was different. He saw how big God is. He remembered how God had helped him kill a bear and a lion when protecting his sheep, and he knew that Goliath was only another creature that God made. David remembered God's promises to protect Israel and that God would honor those who honored Him.



So David wasn't afraid, and David didn't run away from the battle. Even though he was only a boy, he decided to fight Goliath.

King Saul offered David his own armor to wear, but David wasn't used to wearing it and chose to go to battle with only his sling and five smooth stones that he picked up by the brook. Goliath couldn't believe his eyes! "Am I a dog, that you come after me with sticks?" he said. Goliath was sure he could easily defeat little David—but Goliath didn't have the one true God in his perspective. He didn't know that God was ready to help David, but David knew. He told everyone, "The battle is the Lord's!"

Goliath started toward David first. David ran to the battle line, pulled out his sling and placed a rock in it. He slung it over his head and the stone flew through the air straight and true, and sunk right into the middle of Goliath's forehead, just below his helmet. Goliath toppled over and fell to the ground. David took Goliath's own sword and cut off his head. The battle was over in just a few seconds.

The Philistine warriors didn't keep their promise to become Israel's servants when David defeated Goliath. When they saw little David holding Goliath's head, they ran away as fast as they could. Israel's army chased them out of Israel, and many Philistine soldiers were wounded or killed along the way.

David had the right perspective. He saw his big, giant God and knew that nothing, not even the giant Goliath, could stop God from keeping His promises and rescuing His people. God hasn't changed. If you are trusting Christ, you are one of His people. Nothing will stop Him from keeping His promises and rescuing you, too.

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