



**What Made David Great**  
**1 Samuel 17; 1 Samuel 8; Psalm 25**  
**Message from Pastor Martin Hawley**  
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**The Bottom Line: David went from humble shepherd to national hero to great king. But he wasn't great because of his reputation or military power. He was great because of where he'd learned to place his hope.**

**Introduction:**

Ancient warfare: We glamorize it. We fictionalize it. We sanitize it. But the reality was ...

1 Samuel 17:1-4 (NIV84), “Now the **Philistines** gathered their forces for war and assembled at Sokoh in Judah . . . Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them. A champion named **Goliath**, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was nine feet nine inches tall.”

1 Samuel 17:7-11 (NIV84), “His spear shaft was like a weaver’s rod, and its iron point weighed **15 pounds**. Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, ‘Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the **servants of Saul**? Choose a man and have him come down to me. If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us.’ Then the Philistine said, ‘This day **I defy the ranks [armies] of Israel!** Give me a man and let us fight each other.’ On hearing the Philistine’s words, **Saul** and all the Israelites were **dismayed and terrified.**”

We place our **hope in** what we **depend on**.

We place our hope in **whom** we depend on.

When they disappoint, the measure of our hope often becomes the measure of our disdain.

God wanted Israel to place their hope in him.

### **God intended Israel to be a theocracy.**

But Israel insisted on a king like the other nations around them.

1 Samuel 8:1, 3-7, 9 (NIV84), “When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges for Israel. But his sons did not walk in his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice. So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. They said to him, ‘You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.’ But when they said, ‘Give us a king to lead us,’ this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD. And the LORD told him: ‘Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do.’”

The nation’s insistence set the stage for one of the most detailed narrative accounts in ancient literature:

### **The story of King David.**

Reluctant – Confident – Humble

Unlike the typical kind, David believed God gave the law, and that conviction provided him with extraordinary clarity.

David was never **confused** about the identity of Israel’s true King. He was never confused about his limited role, in spirit of his popularity, military success, and power.

Success **confuses** the best of us!

1 Samuel 17:11 (NIV84), “On hearing the Philistine’s words, Saul and all the Israelites were **dismayed** and **terrified**.”

1 Samuel 17:16 (NIV84), “David asked the men standing near him, ‘What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this **disgrace** from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should **defy** the armies of the **living God**?’”

1 Samuel 17:36-37 (NIV84), “Your servant has killed both the

lion and the bear; this **uncircumcised** Philistine will be like one of them, **because** . . . he has **defied** the armies of the **living God**. The **LORD** who **delivered** me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will **deliver** me from the hand of this Philistine.”

### ***The man or woman whose hope is in the LORD need not fear.***

Psalms 25:1, 3, 5 (NIV84), “In you I **trust**, O **my God**. No one whose **hope** is in you will ever be put to shame. **Guide** me in your truth and **teach** me, for you are God **my Savior**, and my **hope** is in you **all day long**.”

David, clear-eyed, confident, and humble, made his way down. He declared to Goliath: the battle is the LORD’s. Then he killed Goliath.

### **Application:**

Those whose **hope** is in the LORD...

- See **clearly**.
- Act **confidently**.
- Walk **humbly**.

They recognize they can’t control outcomes because they have little control over the variables required to control outcomes. Instead, they lean the weight of their lives against the One who has the whole world – all the variables – in his hands.

### **Conclusion:**

Those whose hope is in the Lord declare with David, every morning ... Psalm 25:1, 5 (NIV84) , “In you I **trust**, O my God. My **hope** is in you all day long.”

They see so clearly. They walk so confidently. They cling to their hope in the LORD. David was Israel’s greatest king because as king, he never confused himself with the King.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

- Memorize: Psalm 25:1, 5**
- Declare Every Morning: In you I trust, O my God. My hope is in you all day long.**
- Don’t just declare it. Live it.**
- Join Us Next Week for Part 2: Giant Killer.**