



Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Children's work edition April 2012 Issue 62



The story of David and Goliath

Getting ready

The story of David and Goliath is written in the Bible in the Old Testament, 1 Samuel 17. The stories in the Old Testament are part of a violent history of the land that stretched from Egypt, through Canaan, Mesopotamia and Babylonia. Canaan was known as the Promised Land where the Israelites lived. At the beginning of 1 Samuel there is a period of social change as the way tribes had controlled their people was changing to that of a monarchy ruling groups of tribes.

God in the Old Testament is seen as the Creator and Ruler who takes sides and supports the Israelites against the Philistines. The God of the Old Testament seems very different to the God most Quakers would understand today.

Today reading the story of David and Goliath we may ask ourselves, how could God have been involved in such violence and killing? And when we see the violence still happening in Israel and Palestine we may wonder if violence is part of the nature of human beings? Yet we could also see the story as a way to explore the big issues and difficulties in the world and in people's lives. A child dares to challenge a figure with great power who everybody else is frightened of. Somewhere David, in his own way, knows that something is wrong and that he can help – even if it is in a way we find repugnant and continuing war.

You will need a copy of the Bible, some paper, pens, colouring pencils, pastels, glue and some copies of any *Additional Resource* sheets that you are using.

Gather

Sit together in silence for a few moments. Here are two ways to Gather:

Ask the children to think of a situation, if they can, where they have seen someone be brave or strong. It can be in real life or it may be something they have read about or seen in a film or on television. Give them a few moments to think about the following:

- What do you think was inside the person you were thinking of when they had to show strength at that time?
- What does it feel like to know what to do when something difficult or scary happens?

Imagine a tree on the top of a hill where it is quiet and peaceful. Next a storm begins and gradually builds up so that the tree is blowing furiously in the wind. The storm calms and then stops and once more the tree is still and just the same as before the storm began. Ask children to think about:

- Think about the strength the tree has, its roots buried deep under ground holding it to the Earth's surface.
- What are the things in your life that help to make you strong?

Journeys in the Spirit offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children and young people.

This children's work edition comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with 5–12 year olds in a Quaker setting.

It provides opportunities for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

Underpinning references

'The true measure of a man is not how he behaves in moments of comfort and convenience but how he stands at times of controversy and challenges.' Martin Luther King Jr.

Engage

Read this story of *David and Goliath*:

Saul was a king of the tribe called the Israelites. He kept not doing things that God asked him to do. There was a man called Samuel. He heard God saying to him, "Go to the town called Bethlehem and speak to a man named Jesse – he has eight sons. One of them will be the next king." When Samuel met the sons he thought the eldest, named Eliab, would be the king. But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at the way he looks or how big he is. Eliab is not the one I have chosen, the way he looks doesn't matter to me, look at the heart of the person"

Now, Jesse brought other sons to meet Samuel but none of them were right. Samuel asked Jesse, "Have I met all your sons?" Jesse replied, "I have one left, David, the youngest, is out looking after the sheep. I will bring him to meet you."

As soon as Samuel met David God spoke to him and said, "He is the one." So Samuel put special oil on him. This was a special way of promising him that he would be the next king. From that day on David felt stronger on the inside – somehow God was with him. David carried on looking after the sheep. When he didn't have much to do in the field he played instruments, wrote songs and poems - some are in the book of Psalms in the Bible.

Saul was still king of the Israelites. David and his family were Israelites too. At this time the Israelites weren't getting along with people called the Philistines. The problem with the Philistines was that they had many very big people, giants, living with them. One of the strongest and biggest giants was named Goliath. He was over nine feet tall. He had to bend down to get through an ordinary door.

Goliath was covered with armour and carried a big spear. Every morning and every evening for forty days he shouted across a big field to the Israelites in his big deep voice, "Hey, you guys! I dare you to find one man to fight me. If he can beat me we will become your servants, but if I win you will all become our servants."

When Saul and all his men heard this they were very afraid. Three of these men were David's three oldest brothers – they were the only ones in Jesse's family old enough to be soldiers. They were afraid.

Now David's father Jesse heard about the giant and was worried for his sons. He called David out of the fields and told him to take food to his brothers and come back and tell him how they were. So David set off to visit his brothers. As he approached them he heard Goliath shouting his challenge like he did every morning. David asked: "Isn't someone going to stand up to this man? I will fight him."

One of the men overheard this and ran to Saul, the King, and told him what David said. Saul went to David saying, "You can't fight Goliath, you're only a boy and he has been fighting for many years." But David said, "I have had to fight lions and bears to protect my father's sheep. God kept me safe then and will help now."

Saul didn't know what to do to beat Goliath. Now, he had met this young boy named David who knew exactly what to do, and trusted that God would help him. That's why God loved David's heart and wanted him to be king. Saul dressed David in heavy armour to protect him from Goliath but David took it off. It was so heavy he could hardly walk and he believed that God would keep him from harm. Instead David went to a stream nearby and found five smooth stones, put them in a pocket and with his sling he went to Goliath.

Goliath looked at David and laughed. Goliath thought that he could easily beat David and it was funny that Saul would send a small boy to fight him. But David said to him without fear, "You fight with a sword and I come with God on my side and today everyone will know that there is one true God in this land." Goliath didn't care what David said and he moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly to meet him. Reaching into his pouch he pulled out a stone, put it into his slingshot and shot it at Goliath. The stone hit him right between his eyes and suddenly Goliath started to lose his balance. He fell with a loud thud right on his face. David had done it, he beat the giant Philistine! When the rest of the Philistines saw this they ran away and David became a hero to all the people in Israel.

References & other resources

This *David and Goliath* story is an adaptation of a version from this website:

www.dltk-bible.com

'The Children's Illustrated Bible'
Dorling Kindersley.

'In the beginning'
Jan Pienkowski,
Walker Books.

The story of the Dutch boy and the dyke - *'The Silver Skates'* by Mary Mapes Dodge

"The most simple reality, God, is the one which humanity has striven hardest to complicate. It has become the battle ground of terrible conflicts, the cause of fratricidal wars. God, through the fault of people, has ceased to be able to be a bond which unites and has become a flag to be raised on fields in battle" Pierre Lacout

References & other resources

“Nothing may be between you and God but Christ”
George Fox

What is God? by
Etan Boritzer and
Robbie Marantz

God’s Quiet Things
by Nancy
Sweetland &
illustrated by Rick
Stevens.

All books on this and the previous page can be obtained from the Quaker Bookshop (0207 663 1030) or online from Amazon.

This verse is from ‘*Yours in Friendship - an open letter to Enquirers*’ by Richard Allen

There is a list of songs in the *Links and Resources sheet*.

The *Additional Resources* and the *Links and Resources sheet* listed on this page and above are available at:

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children>

Engage continued:

Pictures of David and Goliath. This story has inspired many painters. On *Additional Resource 62.A* there are some pictures to illustrate the story. On *Additional Resource 62.B* there is also a photograph of the valley where David met Goliath. This can help bring the story to life.

Ask children to think about the story for a moment. Lay down copies of the pictures. Ask children to quietly look at them. After a few moments ask the children to share thoughts about these questions:

- How did the pictures make you feel?
- How well do they show the story of David and Goliath?
- What do you think of the different ways that David is shown?
- How do you think the artist wants us to feel about David and about Goliath?
- Do the pictures remind you of anything?

Additional Resource 62.C there are some more questions to help stimulate conversation and thinking about this difficult and complex story.

Respond

Pictures of David and Goliath.

Either in a group or as individuals ask children to draw or paint their own version of this story. Ask a question like, how do you think you would show the fight between David and Goliath - would you make it modern like one of the artists or would you make it a picture that looks older?

Who or what is God?

God in the Old Testament is a “being” that kings, prophets and other chosen people can talk with or listen to but who cannot be seen. He is a personal God who is all powerful and helps some people but not others. God for most Quakers is different to this. “*God is the grace of inward quiet of deep peace of repose in the light within*” (Pierre Lacout.) or ‘*is a still, small voice in each of us*’. Read the following poem by Martha Whitehead, a Friend aged 13, to the children.

*‘There’s something inside of me
It doesn’t want to get out
It’s part of me
But it’s different
It’s very aware
It can help and guide
And I can trust it
It is in me*

*But it is in everyone
In each it is separate
Continuous
Caring in everything
Caring for everything
It waits for anything and
everything
It is always present’*

Ask the children these questions:

- What do you think Martha is saying or talking about?
- Do you think there is a difference in the God in stories like David and Goliath and the God you think of or hear about today?

Now ask:

- What words would you use to describe God?
- Ask children to write these words in colours that the words make them think of.
- Ask if there are any shapes or other colours they think of when thinking about God?

The words could be cut out to describe God and arranged on a large sheet of paper to share with other people in Meeting.

Reflect

Bring everybody back together again. Sit quietly for a little bit. Ask who would like to say anything in the adult Meeting for Worship about what they have been doing.

End by asking children to do one of the following things:

Think about a strength inside you.

Think of words that say something you like about yourself.

Think of words to describe something you like about someone you know.

End with a moment of stillness (or, alternatively, rushing around in the garden!).



Review

How well do you think the children understood the story of David and Goliath?

How did they react to the violence and to the God of the Old Testament?

Were they able to think about or see a strength in themselves?

Were they able to describe their God? Was there a difference between their God and the God of the Old Testament?

Is there anything that you have learnt from this session?

This issue was written by Adrienne Jorrett and edited by Chris Nickolay and Howard Nurden. Chris Nickolay wrote the Topical activity.

Issue 63 looks in a different way at the story of Jesus feeding 5,000 people. This will be available on May 1st 2012.

Issue 64 explores the story of Moses. This will be available on June 1st 2012.

Issue 65 offers ways to explore the story of Jesus and the children. This will be available on July 2nd 2012.

Materials available online are:

Current issue *Additional Resources* Sheets

An easy to use plan for a Children's Meeting

Links to other resources and information

A simple plan for an all age Meeting for Worship

A topical activity about children in Syria

Also a 'How to use *Journeys in the Spirit*' guide; a link to special issues; an archive of previous issues; a discussion forum and a link to the *Journeys in the Spirit* Youth edition.

All these are available at:

www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren

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Contact:
CYP Staff Team,
Friends House,
173 Euston Road,
London NW1 2BJ

Phone: 020 7663 1013

Email:
bevelies@quaker.org.uk

Website:
www.quaker.org.uk/cyp



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 62.A

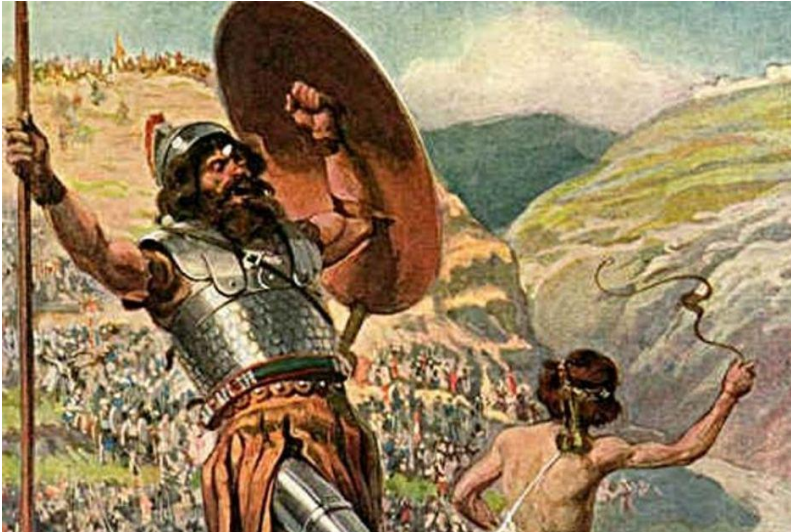
Engage

David and Goliath pictures



David and Goliath by Arsen Kurbanov

<http://academart.com/Kurbanov.htm>



James Tissot

<http://www.jamestissot.org>



David VS Goliath by DDasari

<http://ddasari.com/2011/david-vs-goliath/>



DAVID AND GOLIATH

John August Swanson Limited-edition serigraph © 2005 21" x 31" 60 colors printed



Journeys in the Spirit

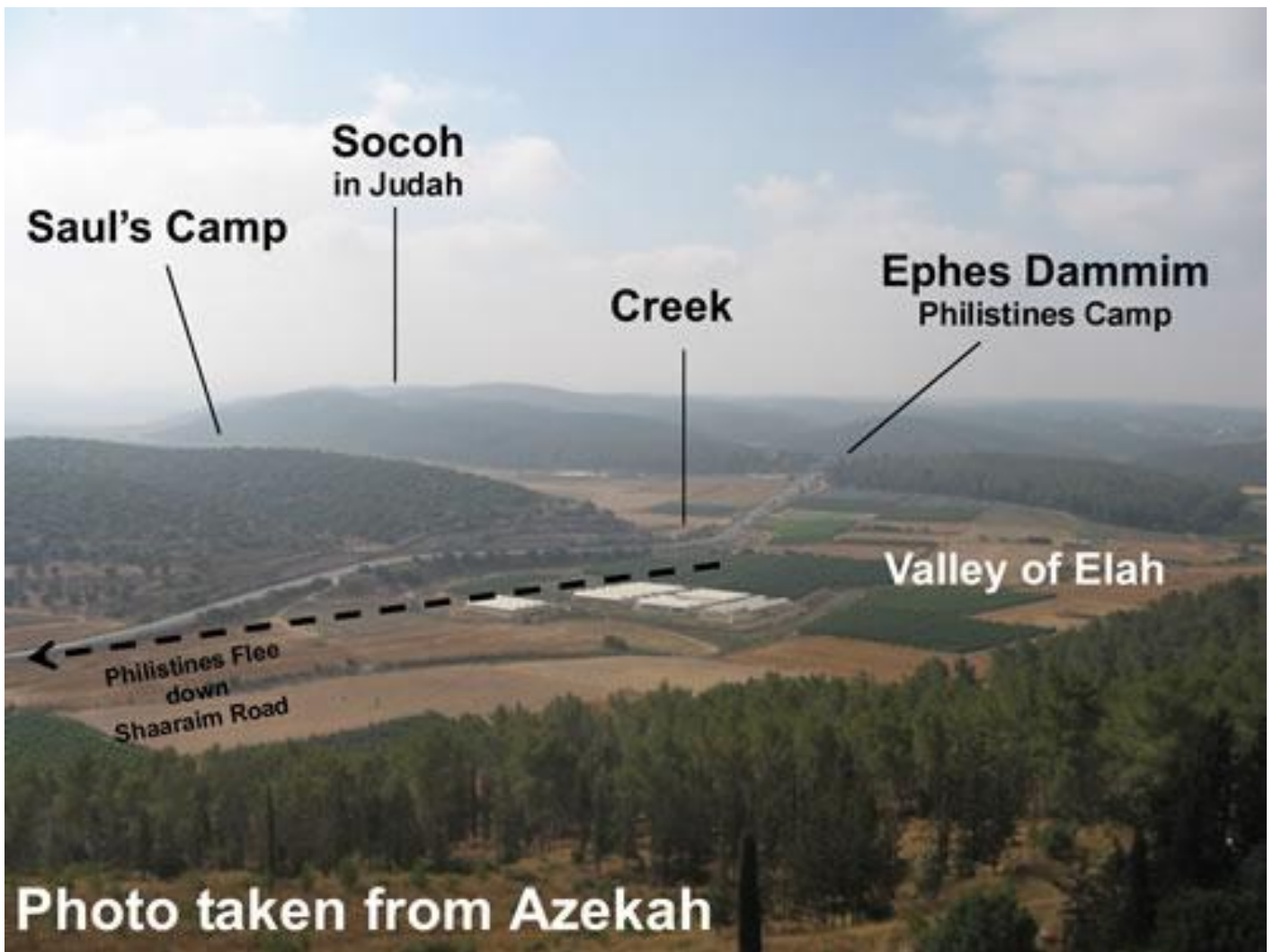
Children's work

Additional resources 62.B



Engage

A picture of the valley where the story of David and Goliath took place





Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 62.C



Respond Some more questions to help explore the David and Goliath story

These questions can be used to help you stimulate a discussion or keep a flow of conversation going after the story or during an activity.

- What do you think about the story?
- Was Goliath brave or was it just David who was brave?
- What do you think about Goliath laughing at David?
- What sort of person would Goliath be seen as today?
- Are there Giants that you have to face in your life?
- If you have had to face a giant what helped you?
- Have you been aware of an inner guide helping you?
- What things can you think of that might stop people fighting?
- Can you imagine a different situation where David talks to Goliath and convinces him to stop the war?
- Look at the story again – can you think of or act out a way to make the ending more peaceful?
- A question for older children: How might this story be told today if it was a news item about Israel/Palestine? What would be different about it?