17.04 David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17:1–51)

✓ "*Check*" it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check "Activities" and "Handwork" found below for additional materials.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *Valley of Elah*: Running east and west, this valley is located about halfway between the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean coast; Azekah, a city overlooking the valley, is directly east of Gath.
- *cubit*: either 18 or 22 inches
- *span*: half a cubit or about 9 inches

Scripture: (ESV)

1 Samuel 17:1 Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle. And they were gathered at Socoh, which belongs to Judah, and encamped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. 2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered, and encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in line of battle against the Philistines. 3 And the Philistines stood on the mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. 4 And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. 5 He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. 6 And he had bronze armor on his legs, and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. 7 The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. And his shield-bearer went before him. 8 He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. 9 If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us." 10 And the Philistine said, "I defy the ranks of Israel this day. Give me a man, that we may fight together." 11 When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

12 Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, named Jesse, who had eight sons. In the days of Saul the man was already old and advanced in years. 13 The three oldest sons of Jesse had followed Saul to the battle. And the names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. 14 David was the youngest. The three eldest followed Saul, 15 but David went back and forth from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem. 16 For forty days the Philistine came forward and took his stand, morning and evening.

17 And Jesse said to David his son, "Take for your brothers an ephah of this parched grain, and these ten loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp to your brothers. 18 Also take these ten cheeses to the commander of their thousand. See if your brothers are well, and bring some token from them."

19 Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. 20 And David rose early in the morning and left the sheep with a keeper and took the provisions and went, as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the encampment as the host was going out to the battle line, shouting the war cry. 21 And Israel and the Philistines drew up for battle, army against army. 22 And David left the things in charge of the keeper of the baggage and ran to the ranks and went and greeted his brothers. 23 As he talked with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him.

24 All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were much afraid. 25 And the men of Israel said, “Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel. And the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father’s house free in Israel.” 26 And David said to the men who stood by him, “What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” 27 And the people answered him in the same way, “So shall it be done to the man who kills him.”

28 Now Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke to the men. And Eliab’s anger was kindled against David, and he said, “Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your presumption and the evil of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.” 29 And David said, “What have I done now? Was it not but a word?” 30 And he turned away from him toward another, and spoke in the same way, and the people answered him again as before.

31 When the words that David spoke were heard, they repeated them before Saul, and he sent for him. 32 And David said to Saul, “Let no man’s heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.” 33 And Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth.” 34 But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, 35 I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him. 36 Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God.” 37 And David said, “The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” And Saul said to David, “Go, and the Lord be with you!”

38 Then Saul clothed David with his armor. He put a helmet of bronze on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail, 39 and David strapped his sword over his armor. And he tried in vain to go, for he had not tested them. Then David said to Saul, “I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them.” So David put them off. 40 Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the brook and put them in his shepherd’s pouch. His sling was in his hand, and he approached the Philistine.

41 And the Philistine moved forward and came near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. 42 And when the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. 43 And the Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 The Philistine said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field.” 45 Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46 This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, 47 and that all this assembly may know that the Lord saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the Lord’s, and he will give you into our hand.”

48 When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. 49 And David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground.

50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. There was no sword in the hand of David. 51 Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.

Introduction/Review:

Saul is king, but God has rejected him. Unknown to Saul, God has told Samuel to anoint ✓25-year-old

David to be the next king. An evil spirit from God is troubling Saul, and David plays his harp to help Saul calm down. Now the Philistines have come to fight; so Saul goes to battle and David goes home to help his father.

Story:

Today's story is one of the most famous in the Bible, but even if we've heard it several times, hopefully we can learn more from it.

Stats on Goliath

Even though Jonathan and Saul and the Israelite army had chased the Philistines back to their own land, the Philistines still wanted Israelite land and thought of a new way to get it. They would have one champion challenge one Israelite to a fight. The army of the loser would become servants to the kingdom of the winner. The champion chosen by the Philistines was who? [Goliath.] He was a giant about ✓nine to ten feet tall, which is about as tall as the rim on a basketball hoop. Can you imagine a man as tall as this ceiling, stooping to get through the door? Would you be scared to see him? I would!

Goliath's armor was as heavy as two third graders—about125 pounds. His spear weighed 15 pounds, as heavy as two gallon jugs of milk. Just the fact that Goliath could carry around so much extra weight shows what a strong man he was.

Layout of the battle plan

Well, let's go to the battlefield. There they are—the Philistines on the south and the Israelites on the north of the Elah Valley [locate].

Oh, oh! Here comes Goliath with his armor bearer into the valley. My! He is big! Listen to him: [Teacher, speak in a booming voice.] "Choose you a man and let him come down to fight me. . . . I defy the armies of Israel today. Send a man!"

Forty days, morning and evening, Goliath did the same thing, defying the God of Israel. Every time Goliath appeared, Saul and his men, including David's three oldest brothers, were "greatly afraid."

Errand of Jesse

Meanwhile, back at Bethlehem, David's father, Jesse, wanted David to take some food to David's three brothers, and he wanted him to find out how the army was doing. David found a babysitter for the sheep, got a carriage, took an ephah (3/5 bushel) of parched grain (roasted until it popped, sort of like popcorn, only much smaller), ten loaves of bread, and ten cheeses for the captain of the army, and went to the Valley of Elah where the armies were arrayed against each other.

Questioning of David

About the same time that David found his brothers, some Israelite soldiers ran out of the valley with great fear, for Goliath had come out to shout his twice-daily challenge. David saw Goliath, listened to his words, and asked some men, "What will happen to the man who silences this giant dog who defies the armies of the living God?"

"Oh, the king will give him great riches, will give him his daughter to marry, and will free his father's family from ever paying taxes."

"Well, who is going to stop this Philistine?" David kept asking one man, then another, then a group of men.

Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard David talking to all these soldiers and got angry. ✓He must have thought David was trying to be a hot shot that needed to be knocked down a peg or two. In anger he said, "You sure are proud for a mere shepherd. With whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know you're just proud and snoopy."

David answered, "What have I done wrong? Isn't this a great cause—to be concerned about God's good

name?" He continued prodding men to face the giant. He talked so much that word got back to Saul.

Blessing of Saul

Saul sent for David. When David came to the king, he said, "Don't be afraid: I will go fight this Philistine."

Saul said, "You're just a young man. Goliath is older and has been a soldier since he was a young man."

David answered, "When I took care of my father's sheep and a lion and a bear came to take lambs, I killed both the lion and the bear. The Lord delivered me from the lion and the bear, and He will deliver me from this Philistine."

Saul then said, "Go ahead, and may the Lord be with you. But put on my armor in order to protect yourself."

David put the armor on, but he said, "I can't wear this because I haven't practiced using it."

Scoffing of Goliath

Instead, David took his staff, went to the brook, picked out five smooth stones, put them in his little bag, took his shepherd's staff, and then went out to meet Goliath. Let's survey this scene.

Here comes Goliath. Perhaps he first glances into the valley and thinks, "Well, after forty days, the Israelites have finally sent someone out to fight me. Let's go, Armor Bearer." As he comes closer, he says, "Why, that is an unshielded young man! Am I a mere dog that you come against me with a shepherd's staff? Cursed are you by my god Dagon and my other gods. Come over here, and I'll feed your body to the birds and beasts."

David came, all right, saying, "You come with a sword, a spear, and a shield, but I come in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. Today the Lord will deliver you into my hand: I will kill you and take your head from you and will give the bodies of all the Philistine army to the birds and beasts so that the whole earth may know there is a God in Israel! And everyone here will know that the Lord doesn't save with sword and spear. The battle is the Lord's; *He* will give you into our hands."

Victory of David

So Goliath came closer, and David ran toward him, got a stone out of his bag, put it into the sling, slung it, and—hit Goliath in the forehead. [Teacher, the next sentence probably should not be taught to small children.] The Bible states that the stone sank into Goliath's forehead. If that stone didn't kill Goliath, David's next action certainly did, for David ran to the giant lying on the ground, took Goliath's sword, and severed his head from his body.

When all the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they wanted to get out of there, and they did, running away from the Israelites.

So we see that David trusted God to kill Goliath without a sword, and God did the job wonderfully.

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:

  Although Jesus came to this earth, meek and lowly as a lamb, He is in charge, winning daily victories for His own people.

  One day He will come in glorious victory over all His enemies.

- Is our God able to do all His holy will? Absolutely! Let us trust Him, especially when giant-sized problems face us.

Activities:

- Play dough: Five smooth stones
- Snack: Parched "corn": heat wheat or barley seed in a frying pan until it "pops" and changes appearance.

Or serve popcorn. Also, bread and cheeses.

- Parch some grain as described in "Snack."
- After making a sling as found in "Handwork" below, practice slinging crumpled paper balls or ping pong balls from a sling. A video on making and using a sling is found at How to Make David's Sling - David and Goliath Slingshot - YouTube.
- Sing "Only *a Young Man*, David" (instead of "*A Boy* Named David" because he was most likely not a boy).
- Read books about this story. Be discerning about pictures and words that are not Scriptural, and point out inconsistencies to students. For example, a stone bouncing off Goliath's head is not sinking into his forehead.
- Play with a Messengers of Faith® talking-David doll if one is available. (They probably are no longer manufactured.)
- Measure students with a cubit (18- or 22-inches) measuring tape made from paper. If you make the tape long enough, you could cut it off at the height of the student, label it as to how many cubits tall the student is, and also label Goliath's height (about 10 feet). Students may take the tape home.
- Show Goliath's height by attaching a 10-foot strip of paper or ribbon to a wall. (The strip may have to fold at a ceiling lower than 10 feet.)
- Review questions: (Game: Place five smooth stones in a transparent container. A student who answers a question correctly may move a stone from one container to the other.)

  1. Who was the Philistine champion? [Goliath.]
  2. How tall was Goliath in Bible terms? [Six cubits and a span.]
  3. How tall was Goliath in English measurement? [Nine feet eight inches; almost ten feet.]
  4. What did Jesse want David to do? [Take food to his brothers and report on the war.]
  5. How did David slay Goliath? [By slinging a stone that sank into Goliath's forehead.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- Psalm 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

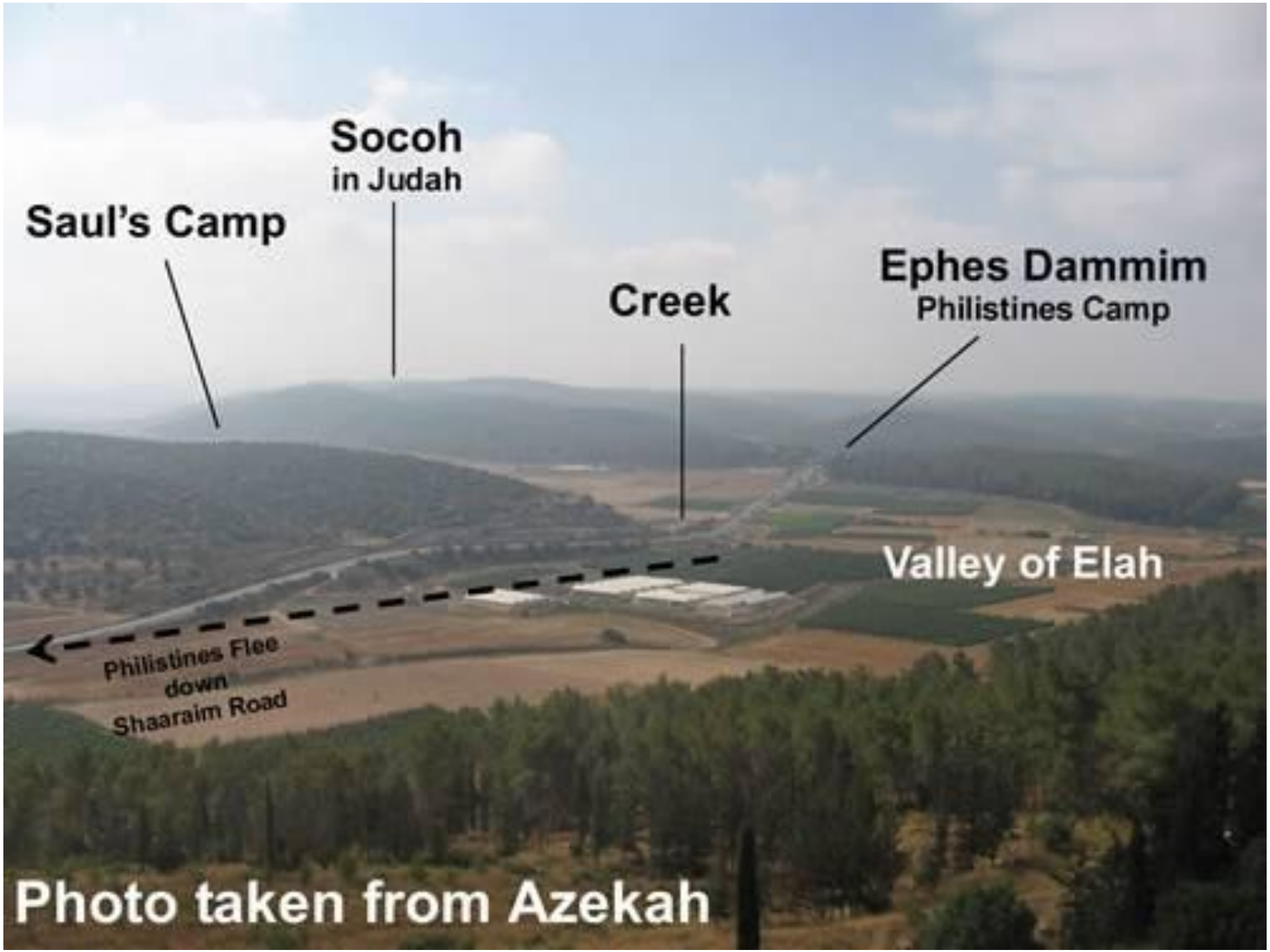
Handwork:

- Make a sling shot made from felt, leather, or upholstery. Make small holes on each end through which a 24" twine string will be tied. Tie a loop on the end of one string to go on the wrist of a student. (See actual-sized slingshot pictured below.)
- Or have students make a cubit measuring stick from poster board. They may write on the back, "Goliath's height was 6 cubits and a span."

Valley of Elah

cubit

span



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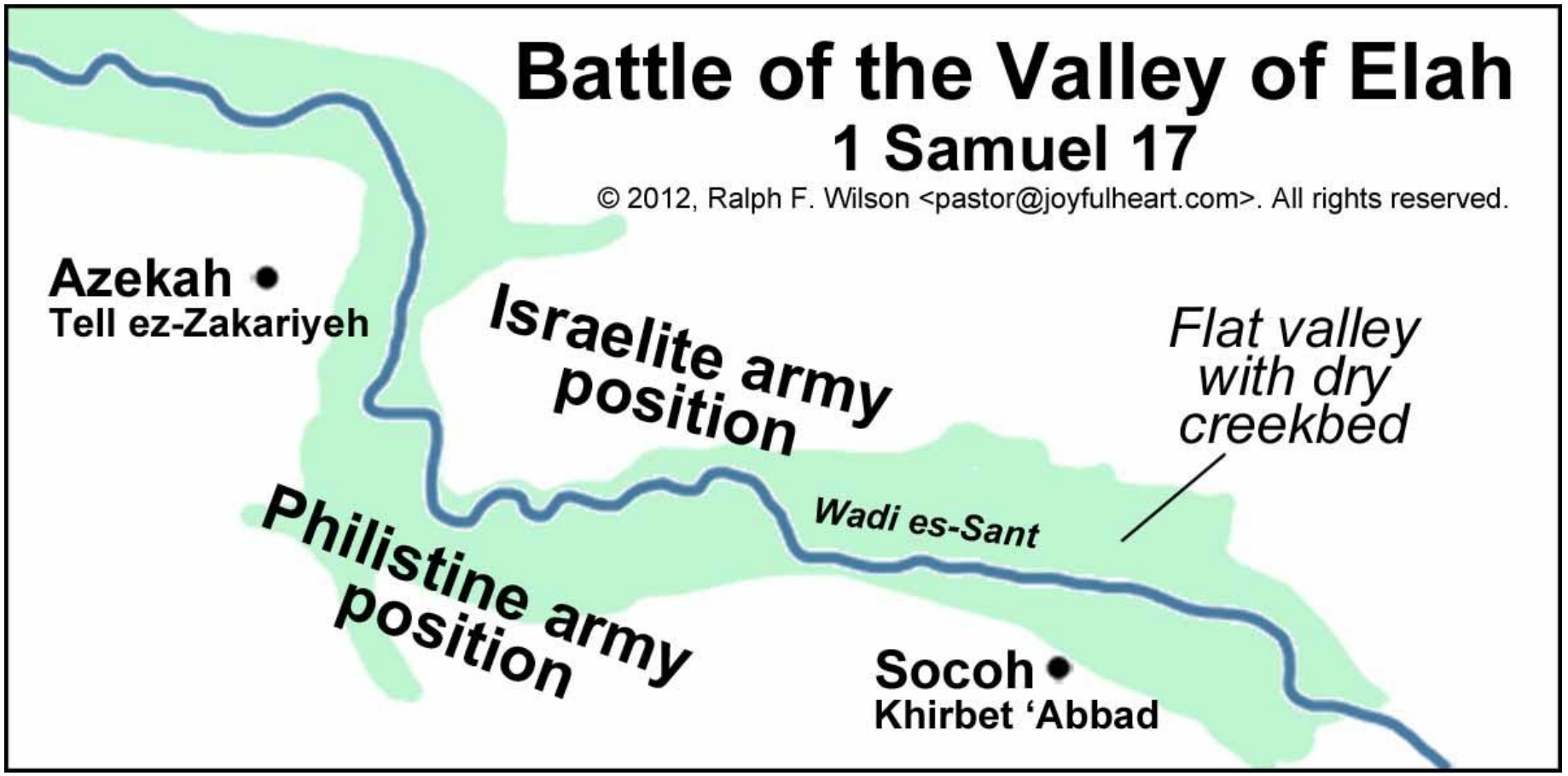

http://www.jesuswalk.com/david/maps/battle-of-the-valley-of-elah-1200x592x300.jpg

The man pictured on the wall was 9 feet tall.

The girl in front was almost 5 feet tall.

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600-David-Brothers.jpg (826×600) (bp.blogspot.com)

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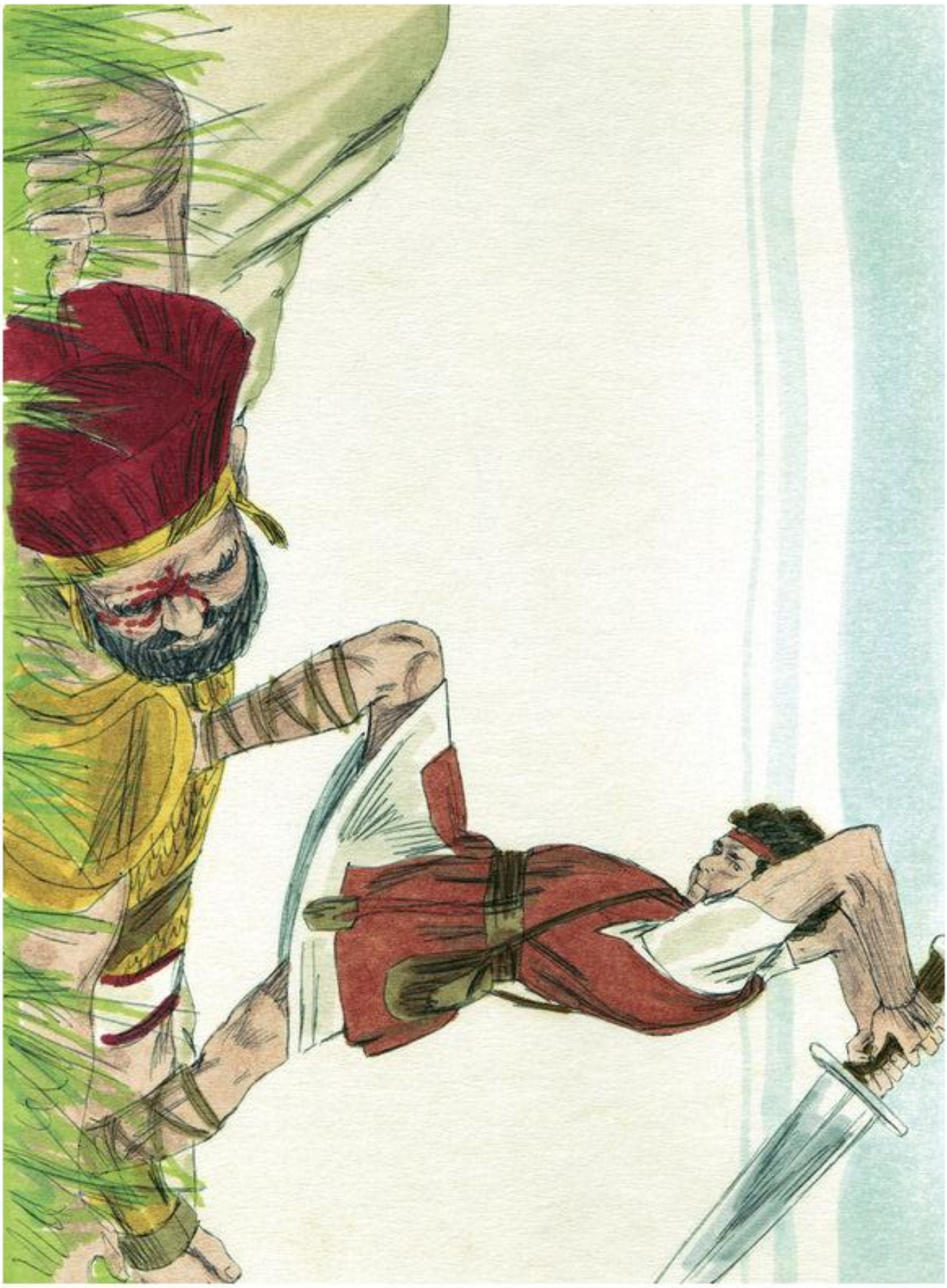
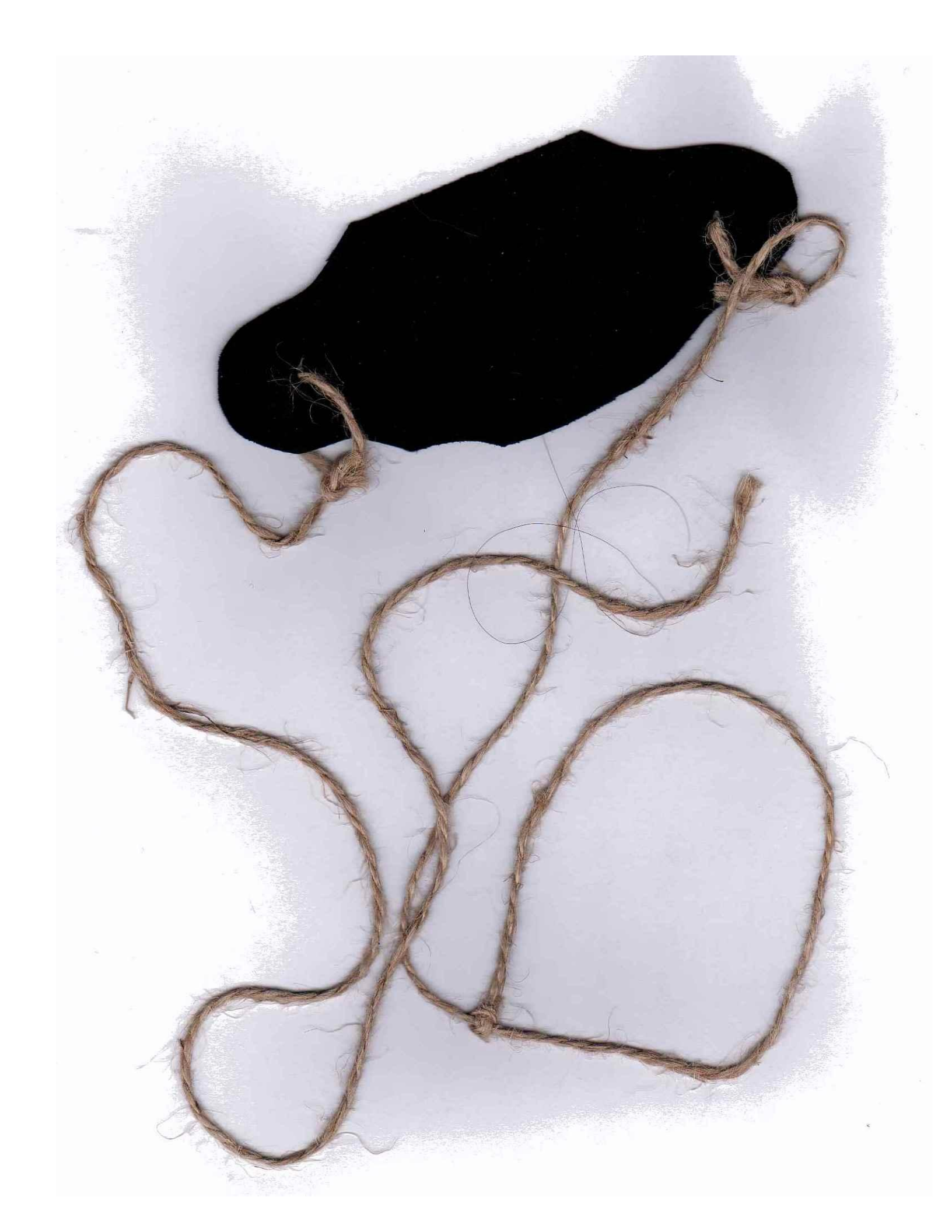
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