



The Shepherd Boy and the Giant

Goal: To be brave when facing bullies.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In 1 Samuel 17

The famous story of David and Goliath shows God's power in bringing victory to the one who appears weak in relation to the one who appears strong.

In a war with the Philistines, the Philistines' champion was Goliath. He was over 9 feet tall and weighed down by heavy armor and armaments (vv. 4-7). Goliath was the ultimate bully in taunting the people of Israel day and night for forty days.

When the boy David brought provisions to his brothers in the army and heard Goliath's insults, he said he could defeat Goliath. King Saul permitted David to try.

Instead of using the same kind of equipment Goliath had, David found five smooth stones to use in his slingshot. This was how he protected his sheep. David told Goliath he was there "in the name of the Lord All-Powerful" (v. 45). David used his slingshot to slay Goliath. The Israelites were able to prevail against the Philistines.

David received God's grace and protection as he stood up against a powerful enemy, a bully who brought fear to everyone. Though it appeared improbable that a young boy could overcome against a huge warrior, God's gracious power prevailed and the Israelites were grateful.

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

Bullies come in all shapes, sizes, and ages. Children know all too well through observation or their own experiences what bullies can do to people. Providing the opportunity for children to share stories is a way to help them begin to wonder about why somebody would choose to be a bully, to be mean to someone, hurting someone with words or actions. The story of David slaying Goliath is told to illustrate how God stood with and behind the Israelites, protecting them and leading them. Also important for the children is helping them name the ways that God cares for them and the places where God is working today to support the work of peacemakers.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

This memorable story about David and Goliath is one of triumph—small over big, wise over folly. It's also a story about retaliation, and in the end, good triumphs over evil, but at a cost: David kills Goliath. This point won't go unnoticed by the children. Be prepared to talk about why God would support David over Goliath. Also it will be important for the children to think about the variety of ways they can respond to a bully without being violent themselves. Helping children remember that they are not alone when they have to face something difficult, that they are surrounded by the love of their family and God's love, is very important.

God, thank you for caring for us when we have to do scary or difficult things. Thank you for caring for each of us. Amen.



Supplies

Music & Melodies
(MM) 2023-2024

Stories, Colors & More
(SCM) i-iv, 8, 15, 17

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

blanket or mats

snack

Guided Play

choice 1: big basket

choice 2: large piece
of green felt, blocks,
toy fences and trees
(optional)

choice 3: adult-size
dress-up clothes

Exploring

choice 1: copies of **Grace
Notes (GN) 1**, toilet-
paper tube and paper-
towel tube for each
child

choice 3: small items to
put in paper bags, such
as a toy car, a soft and
fuzzy toy, a piece of
sandpaper, cotton balls,
and so forth

choice 4: copies of **GN 2**

GATHERING IN GOD'S GRACE

Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so their backs will be to the door.

Use **SCM i-ii**, “Your Visual Schedule,” to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii-iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Select the activities that will work best for you and for your children. You do not need to do everything suggested!

“Exploring God’s Grace” choice 3 requires more prep.

Welcoming and Guided Play



Greet children as they arrive, and say, “Grace and peace be with you.” Prompt them to respond, “And also with you.” Be sensitive to any children who might be coming for the first time. Introduce yourself to parents/caregivers that you do not know personally. Tell them that today’s story is about David, the shepherd boy, and Goliath, the giant soldier. Invite the children to choose a guided-play activity to start:

- 1. Big and Small**—Place a piece of masking tape down the center of a table. Invite the children to find similar big and small items in your classroom, such as a large paper plate and a small paper plate, a large book and a small book, and so forth. Have them put the items in one big basket. Take out a pair of similar items and ask them which item is big and which item is small. Place the big item on one side of the masking tape and the small item on the other side, making a side of big items and a side of small items.
- 2. Being a Shepherd**—Spread a large piece of green felt on the floor or a table. Place some blocks, toy fences and trees (if available), and cotton balls on the felt. Invite the children to be a shepherd and make a field for their sheep (the cotton balls) using the blocks and other items. Encourage them to move their sheep around. Every so often, you could pick up some sheep and move them from one place to another and tell the children that their sheep have gotten out of their field and need rescuing.
- 3. Big Clothes**—Invite the children to put on big clothes, such as adult suit jackets, dresses or skirts, shoes, hats, and gloves. Tell the children that they will hear a story about David, the shepherd boy, who once put on adult-size armor. Explain that armor is what a soldier would wear.



- T *Transitions can be difficult for children. Do not force reluctant children to join a group activity. Instead, allow them to observe quietly from their own play area or to listen to a story read to them by an adult helper until they are ready to join the group.*

Transitioning to Story Time

When you sense the children are ready to move into group time, call them to the story corner, singing “Wherever I May Wonder”—**MM 2**; **SCM 15**. Repeat words and phrases as seems appropriate.

Jump and Shout



Say the following poem and do the motions indicated, inviting the children to repeat each phrase.

God made me to jump and shout. (*jump*)
 God made me to move about. (*wiggle hips*)
 God made me to wiggle around, (*wave arms and turn in a circle*)
 and God made me to sit right down. (*sit cross-legged on the ground and fold hands in lap*)

I Am Brave



Invite the children to repeat your words and follow your actions.

I am strong. (*stand in a “strongman” stance*)
 I am kind. (*gently pat neighbor on the back*)
 I am brave. (*arms stretched out in front*)
 I am faithful. (*arms reaching up in praise to God*)
 I can be quiet. (*sit down quietly*)



Today’s story can be found in *Growing in God’s Love: A Story Bible*, edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2018), www.pcusastore.com.

Hearing the Story

Open the Bible to 1 Samuel 17 so the children know the story comes from the Bible. Tell the children that they are going to hear a story about David, the shepherd boy, and Goliath, the giant soldier.

Read **SCM 8**. Express the emotions of the story in your voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, “Amen.”

Remind the children that David was a boy and Goliath was a very large man. Read the story again. Invite the children to stand and reach up high when they hear Goliath’s name and to kneel down and put their hands on hips when they hear David’s name.



EXPLORING GOD'S GRACE

1. Tell the Story Again B C

In the retelling of the story, try to emphasize the faith and trust David has in God, not the violence in the story. Young children need to hear about David's strength of character, not just about throwing stones.

Tell the children that they are going to make puppets of David and Goliath to tell the story again. Hand out copies of **GN 1** and invite the children to color the pictures of David and Goliath. When they have finished, cut out the David strip and the Goliath strip. Instruct them to glue the David strip onto a toilet-paper tube and the Goliath strip onto a paper-towel tube. Invite the children to use their David and Goliath puppets to tell the story again using the following sentences:

- ▼ David is a shepherd boy. (*hold up the David puppet in one hand*)
- ▼ Goliath is a giant soldier. (*hold up the Goliath puppet in another hand*)
- ▼ David knows how to protect his sheep from dangerous animals. (*wave the David puppet around*)
- ▼ Goliath brags. (*lift the Goliath puppet up high and say, "I am the greatest!"*)
- ▼ Goliath is a bully. (*shake the Goliath puppet toward the David puppet and say, "I will crush you!"*)
- ▼ David says he will fight Goliath. (*move the David puppet toward the Goliath puppet*)
- ▼ Goliath laughs. (*move the Goliath puppet toward the David puppet and say, "Ha! Ha! Ha!"*)
- ▼ David is not afraid. His strength is from God. (*have the David puppet knock over the Goliath puppet*)

B *Providing opportunities for children to act in front of others can be a fun way to learn from each other and can build children's confidence. However, it can also provide opportunities for unwanted behavior such as bullying or fidgeting. Help children focus on respecting others and being polite.*

2. Don't Be a Bully, Goliath

Lay a long length of mural paper on the floor. Have the children work together to fold the mural paper in half and open it back up. Tell them, "This will be where we draw Goliath's waist." Have them fold the top to the center and say, "This is where we will put his shoulders." Have them fold from the bottom to the center and say, "We can put his knees here."

Have the children take turns drawing the different parts of Goliath, as they feel comfortable, using the description below. Some children may not want to draw. Encourage them to cheer on the others.

- ▼ A large circle above the shoulder line for the head
- ▼ Neck below the circle
- ▼ Shoulders and chest below the shoulder line



- ▼ Arms
- ▼ Belt at the waist line
- ▼ Hips and upper legs to the knees below the waist
- ▼ Knees and lower legs
- ▼ Feet

Tape the Goliath on the wall. Have the children take turns standing next to the tall Goliath and drawing a line with a heart for how tall they are in comparison. Tell them that their hearts are big, and they can stand tall and be brave.



3. Being Brave

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Prepare several paper bags with an item in each one, such as a toy car, a soft and fuzzy toy, a piece of sandpaper, cotton balls, and so forth. Remind the children that David was brave. Tell them that being brave means doing something that may scare you, but feeling strong enough to do it. Ask the children if they are brave like David. Invite them to take turns putting their hand in a paper bag without looking to see what is in it. Reassure them that there is nothing that will hurt them in the bag!

Use “wonder” questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wondering questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.

4. Coloring Page

FM C

Hand out copies of GN 2 and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture of David and Goliath. Engage the children in conversation as they color, using the following wondering questions:

- ▼ I wonder, “What did David know as a shepherd that would help him with Goliath?”
- ▼ I wonder, “How did David feel when he defeated Goliath?”

T *Transitions can be difficult. This may be a good time for some quick physical activities, such as touching toes, reaching high, turning in a circle, and so forth.*



LOVING AND SERVING GOD

LG FA

Call the children together and listen to “May the God of Hope Go with Us (Dios de la esperanza)”—**MM 6; SCM 17**. Tell the children that the song is sung in English and in Spanish. Repeat words and phrases as seems appropriate. Play the song again and invite the children to try singing in both languages. Remind the children that David was brave because he knew God was with him, even when he may have felt afraid. Ask the children how they might be brave this week.

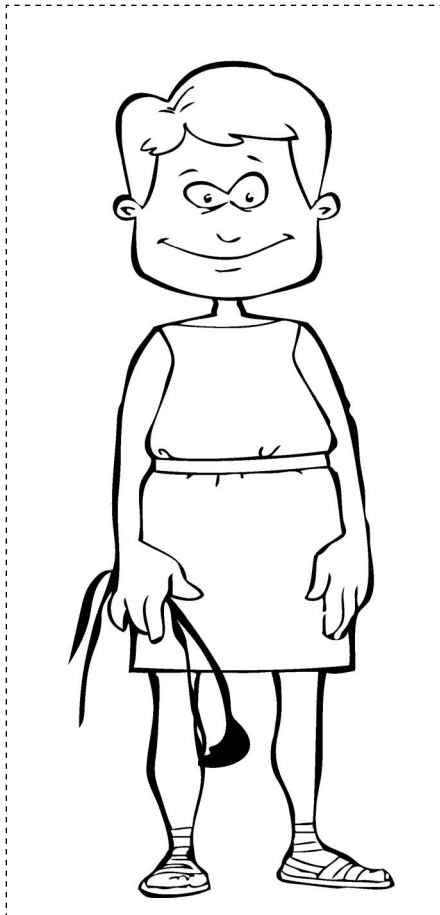
Call the children to snack time. Invite the children to repeat each line of the following prayer.

Bless the food before us, /
the friends beside us, /
and the love between us. /
Amen. /

As the children leave, bless them: “(Name), the grace of God is with you. Be brave!”



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so you can send the Grace Sightings link, or invite them to visit www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads. Remind the parents and caregivers about the story audio (see p. vii).



The Shepherd Boy and the Giant



David knew that God would keep him safe.

