

# God Calls and Prepares David

## DARRELL DELANEY

Big threats get big attention. A giant body; a loud voice; a public challenge; that is what people usually notice first, but in 1 Samuel Chapters 16 and 17, God reminds us that he does not see the way we see. Today on *Groundwork*, we look at David's anointing and David's encounter with Goliath, and we discover that, while people are captured by appearance, God is acting through the one they almost overlooked. Stay tuned.

## SCOTT HOEZEE

Welcome to *Groundwork*, where we dig into scripture to lay the foundation for our lives. I am Scott Hoezee.

## DARRELL DELANEY

And I am Darrell Delaney; and Scott, we are on episode five of our seven-part series on the book of 1 Samuel, and we have seen a pattern by now that keeps repeating itself. We see God moving, we see people responding; but then, we also see that underneath there is always a deeper issue of trust, identity, and alignment. So, Hannah trusts God in her pain; and then Israel fails to trust God and tried to control him in the next episode; and then, in the episode after that, we have seen that people ask for a king because they wanted something visible to depend on. Now, Saul, he did look the part, but his leadership exposed something deeper; and now, we are coming to the part where God quietly begins to reset everything, in this part where Chapters 16 and 17 come in.

## SCOTT HOEZEE

And this all raises some questions, of course: If Saul was not the right person...if eventually a reset would be needed that would lead to David, as we will see in today's episode, then why did God tell Samuel, in the first place, to anoint Saul? We are told he was a head taller...sure. He had some potential...sure; but he ended up being the wrong one. Now, we do believe God does not make mistakes, so there must have been, somehow in God's divine plan, some reason for choosing Saul; maybe as a way to get to David...I don't know. These are questions we cannot answer; but what we do know is what comes next in 1 Samuel 16, beginning at verse 6. Samuel has traveled to Bethlehem with kind of an entourage, has gone to the house of Jesse. At verse 6 it says: When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab...(this is one of Jesse's sons)...Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord." <sup>7</sup>But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." <sup>11</sup>So he (Samuel) asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" (Well...) "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He is tending the sheep." Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives." <sup>12</sup>So he (Jesse) sent for him (David) and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one." <sup>13</sup>So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.

## DARRELL DELANEY

So, Scott, what stands out in this passage immediately is the mistake that Samuel makes. It is a natural mistake: Okay, we are going to take the eldest son, we are going to take the most strapping individual; he is the one. He looks at the outer appearance of this guy. I am pretty sure he is tall; he is handsome; he is strong; and he looks pretty able-bodied: All right; this is the guy. But then, the Lord is teaching him something

different, because, I mean, culturally speaking, Israel looks at the firstborn son...the eldest being the most important role after the parents...the firstborn usually gets all the attention; but the Lord is teaching Samuel here: I am going to change your framework; I am going to change the way you think about this. You are thinking about the outer appearance and I am looking at the heart of a person; and God wants him to understand that very important point.

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

Exactly; and you know, I mean, all of David's brothers...and we didn't read quite all of that, but I mean...all of them looked good to Samuel, until he ran out of kids, and so he says: Jesse, you got anybody else? Ah, just the little guy, you know, David. Well, go get him, for goodness' sake. So, all of the brothers were the people who would be on the cover of People Magazine today, or GQ as the most handsome men in the world; but God is interrupting all of that for Samuel, and what is interesting, Darrell, he is not just correcting Samuel's choice, but his whole framework, as you just said. God is looking inwardly in a way that Samuel is not able to do. God sees something deeper than Samuel can see, so Jesus gets David, and he is the one now. He is also healthy, you know...aglow with good health, and he is a handsome kid, too. But he is the little one, but that is God's choice, and we have seen that in Genesis. In the ancient world, there was this practice called *primogeniture*, which meant: firstborn, first in line; but in Genesis, God overturned it again and again. Cain was the older, Abel was the favored; Esau was the older, Jacob was the favored; eleven other brothers were older, Joseph was the favored. So, God is always going to sort of the bottom of the heap, choosing the unlikely. He needs a spokesperson to talk to Pharaoh...Moses, who has a stutter. On and on and on it goes; God is always overturning what we humans think are important.

### **DARRELL DELANEY**

Yes; it is really crazy how David is not even last in line; he is not even considered a part of the conversation...

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

He's not even in the line...

### **DARRELL DELANEY**

I think that, you know, when we understand that God chooses people and places where their identity has not been shaped by public opinion or by likes online or any of that stuff. God is actually choosing people who he can get the glory out of, because they know they came from nowhere. So, when David is brought in...he is anointed, he is the one...that is the defining moment, but David goes right back to the field after this. So now, okay, you have been anointed, you are going to be king, and the oil is literally...he is wiping it off his face and out of his eyes and he is going right back to where he was working; so now, there is this gap between the anointing and the actual appointing of the reign of David. So, God is doing some character work there, isn't he, Scott?

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

Exactly; yes, it is interesting. He just goes back to work; and we will know in the coming chapters, Darrell, that for many, many years...

### **DARRELL DELANEY**

Twenty years...

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

Yes; Saul and David overlap. We have two anointed people in Israel for a long...a couple of decades worth of time; and it is not just going to be a couple of decades worth of time, it is going to eventually, as we will see in future episodes, it is a tortured time; it is a horrible time for David, as Saul comes after him. But in the meanwhile, he has this long, in-between time, which can seem like a waste of time; and maybe we have sometimes felt God has called me to something; I think God has something ready for me, but I am not there yet; I am in this in-between time; maybe it can even feel like a wilderness time, but right, that is a time of

formation. In the story that comes next, we are going to see David remember this in-between time as being key for what will come next. So, sometimes those in-between times...those valleys...those times of waiting... can feel frustrating and meaningless, but God is always at work.

## **DARRELL DELANEY**

Yes; I can think about seasons in my own life, and maybe others can think about seasons in their life. I can speak for myself, where I was carrying responsibility early, and I was stepping into roles and didn't get any recognition for any of those; learning how to respond under pressure without anyone affirming that that stuff mattered; but at the time, it felt like survival for me; but when I look back, God is using that stuff to form me and to build me into something that I didn't have language for; and that can be the development that is happening in a lot of people's lives; and it is not delay when it does not happen immediately; and we need to learn to trust God in those situations.

## **SCOTT HOEZEE**

Exactly; you know, we have mentioned before on *Groundwork* that sometimes God's providence is best recognized in hindsight, you know. We didn't realize what God was doing, but then years later you look back and say: Ohhhh, *that* is why God kept me from knowing this, or that is why God made me wait, because he had to give me something else first before I could enter the season of what was new.

So, the providence of God is often quiet, but we believe it is steady; we believe that it is firm; and we believe that that in-between time for David was key for everything that was going to come up for him next. So, that is something for all of us to keep in mind in all of the seasons of our lives.

But speaking of what is next for David, something pretty big is next, and we are going to enter that in just a moment, so please stay tuned.

*Segment 2*

Darrell Delaney:

You are listening to *Groundwork*, where we dig into scripture to lay the foundation for our lives. I am Darrell Delaney.

## **SCOTT HOEZEE**

And I am Scott Hoezee; and Darrell, now the story shifts dramatically and we move from a quiet field where David is tending the sheep, to a loud battlefield. We should note that David's older brothers...those strapping ones that God did not choose...they are out with the soldiers. David is still back home, taking care of the sheep. He is the little guy...he is the younger brother; but his father, Jesse, sends him to the front lines with some food: Bring your brothers some food, and then let me know what is going on up there. You know, they didn't have CNN back then; they didn't have telephones. So, bring some food and bring back a report. So, David is now approaching the battlefield as we move into 1 Samuel 17, beginning at verse 4.

## **DARRELL DELANEY**

It says: A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span. <sup>5</sup>He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels; <sup>6</sup>on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. <sup>7</sup>His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. His shield bearer went ahead of him. <sup>8</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>If he is able to fight (me) and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us." <sup>10</sup>Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other." <sup>11</sup>On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

## **SCOTT HOEZEE**

<sup>26</sup>David asked the man 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?" <sup>32</sup>[But] David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a

bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, <sup>35</sup>I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. <sup>36</sup>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. <sup>37</sup>The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.” Saul said to David, “Go, and the Lord be with you.”

### **DARRELL DELANEY**

So, we see Goliath has actually taken over this moment: It is his armor; it is his size; it is his voice; it is his confidence and his cocky attitude that the text gives detail after detail because they want us to experience what Israel is experiencing. They are being intimidated; this is the kind of presence that makes people step back and question whether anything can be done about this guy. That intimidation, over time, because it wasn't that he did it one day, he did it forty days straight; and so, when these things are actually coming at people, I think that fear can go deep and take root in your heart if you hear it or it reminds you that it is there each and every day like it happened with them.

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

And again, in the text, everything is in cubits and shekels, but it translates...you can check your footnotes in your Bible, probably, and they think that Goliath was well over 9 foot 9 inches tall. His armor weighed 125 pounds, you know; his spear was 15 pounds; I mean, this guy was just huge. He is large and in charge...and yes, when you see that, and drip, drip, drip day after day...and the army is paralyzed; nobody has even tried to fight him yet. They are just cowering because all they can see is an impossible situation. We have all been in situations like that. It seems insurmountable; it seems impossible; we try to come up with solutions; maybe we even try something on our own; maybe we are too terrified to even try and we are just paralyzed. That is where Israel is. Saul is paralyzed; David's brothers are paralyzed; all their fellow troops are paralyzed; this is a complete stalemate, and Goliath just keeps insulting God; speaking of whom, Darrell...that is who David brings back to the center; David finally brings God back into the picture in a way Saul had not done, nor anybody else.

### **DARRELL DELANEY**

Yes; you know, it can be really intimidating when the steady drumbeat of something keeps showing up and it starts defining how we think; when bill collectors are calling, or when bullies are nagging every day at school, or you are having chronic pain in your body; like these things can affect your mind, your body, and your soul over time; and like you said, David has actually seen a different perspective. Everyone is hearing these words, but the way David hears these words is different than the way everyone else hears it, because he sees it as defiance against the true and living God Almighty; and he brings God into the center of the situation, like you said, and that simple thing changes everything; because if the problem is the center of everything, then it will actually create more panic and anxiety and frustration; but if God is at the center, and we trust him, then actually, we can introduce the problem to our God instead of the other way around.

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

Exactly; and you know, we said in the earlier segment, Darrell, that after David got anointed, he just went back to the fields; and we said that was kind of an in-between time, like he has been equipped and anointed for something big, but it isn't happening yet, but God uses that in-between time, and now we see why. So, what does David do here? How does he bring God back into the center of things? He remembers...

### **DARRELL DELANEY**

Yes.

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

He remembers: Oh, there was that lion that one time; there was that bear another time; I asked God for help and God helped me kill the bear; he killed the lion. Why in the world wouldn't God do the same thing here? Yeah, this guy is big, but so are lions and bears, you know; so, David is just like: What exactly is the problem here, guys? I mean, it is almost funny. It is like they had to look at him with their mouths hanging open: You

cannot see the problem? David can see the problem, but he sees God more; and again, it was that in-between time when nothing seemed to be happening; when actually, Darrell, everything was happening.

### **DARRELL DELANEY**

Yes, you mentioned remembering; so, Deuteronomy...the whole Old Testament in general is about remembering God's mighty deeds, and they actually commanded to tell one generation about what God has done to the next generation in Psalm 145:4: It says that one generation commends your works to another; but Deuteronomy's book itself, right before they go into the Promised Land, Moses is making sure: You remember what God has done. Remember how he delivered you from Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm when you go into the Promised Land, remember the Lord.

I think that it reminds me, too, of like when I was at church, we did testimony service. We would go around with a microphone and we would share: Hey, listen; tell something that God has done for you. Remember his faithfulness and share it with the congregation. It benefits the person and it blesses the church to know: Hey, God is still actually doing that. If he can do it for them, he can do it for us.

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

That is indeed why testimony in the history of God's people...Old Testament and New, and right into the Church today, as you just shared, Darrell...testimony encourages everybody, because if God could do it for me, he can do it for you; and that is basically what David was doing. He was testifying: Look, God helped me with a lion; God helped me with a bear; God will help me here. So, it is sort of interesting here, Darrell, these back-to-back stories we've got here, where in the previous chapter, Samuel is impressed with Eliab's height. God said: I don't pay attention to height. Now, everybody in Israel is impressed with Goliath's far greater height. God says: Yeah, I don't pay attention to height; and neither does David. So, we can take comfort from this because it is a story of testimony; it is a story of holy and sacred remembering on David's part...

### **DARRELL DELANEY**

Yes.

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

And when we remember the past, we are often strengthened for the future; and in just a moment, we will see exactly how that played out for David. Stay tuned.

*Segment 3*

### **DARRELL DELANEY**

I am Darrell Delaney, with Scott Hoezee, and you are listening to *Groundwork*.

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

And Darrell, now in 1 Samuel 17, we come to the moment that everybody recognizes, but the meaning of the story goes deeper than we think. So, let's listen to 1 Samuel 17 at verse 45: David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. <sup>46</sup>This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. <sup>47</sup>All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands." <sup>48</sup>As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. <sup>49</sup>Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank (deep) into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground. <sup>50</sup>So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand, he struck down the Philistine and killed him.

## **DARRELL DELANEY**

So, even before the battle begins, Scott, there is this moment that comes where Saul hears the testimony of what David testifies about what God did with the bear and the lion in an obscure place that no one saw. So, now Saul is saying: Here, take my armor. You need to get my armor and wear it and put it on and go into battle, so you can be ready. David tries this stuff on; he cannot move around in it; he realizes it is not for him. That was a very discerning moment for David and a moment of clarity because he realized that these are not the tools that God gave me in the place where you did not know about, King Saul, to learn to use to actually grow in and see God's hand delivering. I didn't need the armor then; I don't need the armor now. So, when David goes into battle, he realizes that God is the one who worked in his life, and it wasn't because he had the best armor or the best weapons. He refuses to fight the battle in the way that Saul expects him to.

## **SCOTT HOEZEE**

Anyway, if I were David, I would have said to Saul: Well, if this armor is so great, why don't you put it on and go get Goliath? Obviously, you don't take any comfort in this armor, why would I? Even if the armor had fit David to a T, which it didn't, but even if had fit him to a T, I think David would have said: No thanks. Have you been listening to me? That is not the difference. If it were, Saul, you could put it on and go get this guy, but clearly that is not what this is about. And David has been saying that exactly. Saul was not even quite listening when David said: This is the Lord's, but it is not armor; it is not swords or... But, you know, again, we have all been there. We have been in those situations and we said that, you know, we feel something is insurmountable...we feel that we have to bring to the battle, if you will, or what we bring to the struggle, even if it is not a literal battle, isn't enough, but if we are trusting God, then what little we bring forward...for David it was just a sling and some stones he had earlier picked up from a riverbed...God will make it enough. Of course, Goliath is not buying, I mean, from a human perspective, David looks like a little flea to this incredibly tall, mighty man. So, he swaggers; he insults God again, which is only going to double David's determination, because he is there to defend God's honor, but Goliath does not get any of that.

## **DARRELL DELANEY**

Yes; so, you know, when David says: The battle is the Lord's and he will deliver you into my hands; that is the perspective that David knows: I (David) am going to do something, but God is going to bring the ultimate result of this battle; and so, Goliath is coming in his own strength, and there is the contrast. So, we have a guy who is trusting in his own ability because he has been through all these wars and battles and things; and we have another guy who is trusting in the deliverance of the Lord God Almighty, and testifying to his name. So, what we do in our lives, Scott, we walk and we act faithfully and we trust God and we let God handle the results of the things that are challenging to us. We go in faith, but we trust God.

## **SCOTT HOEZEE**

You know, Darrell, this is one of those Bible stories...there are some, like Noah and the ark and so forth...this is one of those Bible stories that has become worldwide famous. People who seldom, if ever, go to church know what people mean when they say: Oh, this is just like David versus Goliath, right? This is David and Goliath. And what do they mean? Well, this is the little guy taking on the big guy. So, this is the ordinary house mom, whose kid got poisoned by the chemical waste of a big, multinational corporation and she sues the corporation. Oh, David versus Goliath. Whenever the underdog wins, we say: You see, the underdog can take on the big guy and win; but that is not actually what the story is about at all. It is *not* David versus Goliath, and David would be the first to tell you that; it is *God* versus Goliath. David wasn't an underdog at all, because he knew God was going to take care of it. That stone didn't kill Goliath, the power of God working through David killed Goliath. So, the way this story is perceived in the popular imagination does not quite get the theology right.

## **DARRELL DELANEY**

Yes; it is interesting that...the point you are making is that many of us live as if everything rests on our shoulders to do, and the determination and the doggedness of the underdog is the one who gets it done, but that actually does not work in real life: It works in Hollywood; it works in storybooks, but it creates anxiety

and hesitation and frustration in us; and ultimately sometimes we just decide the giant is too big and we pull back completely and say: No, we cannot do it; but David is actually pointing us to the one who he needs to trust and that we all need to trust. So, even though he acts decisively, he trusts God fully. It just reminds me, Scott...*Remember the Titans*; it is one of my favorite movies. It is a movie about the '60s, where there is segregation and racism. They have this black player and these white players on a high school team, and they are at a place where they are training...they are doing their football training; and they come to Gettysburg and the coach says: These men who fought at Gettysburg...they had a bigger cause...fear was a thing...it was real...but they had a bigger cause that they didn't give into fear about; and I think David is understanding that he is not giving into fear, because his bigger cause is: This is the name of the Lord that we are fighting in and he is going to deliver us. So, if we can trust God in our situations, even though fear is present, then we will do the right thing.

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

And no doubt for many of us listening to this program, or for you and me recording this program, we know about this, right, Darrell? We know about situations that look overwhelming; but in those situations, we have to try...it is not easy to see with the eyes of God...not just the outward things, but the inward truths of God.

### **DARRELL DELANEY**

Yes; it is beautiful to see because this story right here reminds us to step forward with clarity about who God is and the confidence to know that he is already at work in our lives. So, that means we don't have to wait until we feel ready by other people's standards, and we don't need to match those things. We are called to walk in alignment with the God who called us to step forward when the moment comes; and that is the God who sees us, thanks be to God.

### **SCOTT HOEZEE**

Well, thank you for listening and digging deeply into scripture with *Groundwork*. We hope you will join us again next time as we continue our study of 1 Samuel by examining the stories about Saul and David. Connect with us now at [groundworkonline.com](http://groundworkonline.com) to share what *Groundwork* means to you, or tell us what you would like to hear discussed next on *Groundwork*.

### **DARRELL DELANEY**

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*Printed on July 3, 2026*