

## Giant Killers Introduction

He was just one man. One man standing in a valley, facing an army of thousands of seasoned warriors on a mountainside who were trembling in fear. Sure he was almost ten feet tall. Sure his armor alone weighed more than any man facing him. But still ... he was just one man! Compared to the strength of an entire army, he was insignificant. But still they hid. For almost six weeks, one man brought an entire army to a standstill.

In 1 Samuel 17, David walked into a mess. He was sent by his father to take some food to his brothers serving in Israel's army. When he got there, he found the entire army cowering in fear from one man—Goliath. Israel was at war with the Philistines, and each army was camped on opposing hills with the intention of doing battle in the valley between them.

Before the first battle, a nine-foot-nine-inch giant named Goliath walked out and challenged the army of Israel. If someone came out to fight him and won, the Philistines would be Israel's slaves. If Goliath won, Israel would be slaves of the Philistines. This went on for forty days with Goliath issuing his challenge and taunting the frightened soldiers. But then David showed up.

It's a familiar story. David, a young shepherd (approximately sixteen years old), was sent by his father to deliver food to his brothers. He heard Goliath's taunt and volunteered to fight him. Word got to King Saul, who argued that David had neither the skill nor the experience to face Goliath, but David prevailed. Saul tried giving David his armor, but it was too big for him. So, armed with a slingshot and five stones, he ran out to face Goliath. On his first try, he hit Goliath in the head and knocked him out. He then took Goliath's sword and cut off his head, at which time the Philistine army fled. Israel then chased them down, defeated them, and the battle was won.

We all have giants in our lives: issues holding us back, immobilizing fear, intimidating opportunities, attitudes and life experiences keeping us from moving forward (guilt, insecurity, broken relationships, apathy, passivity, etc.). These issues become our glass ceiling, keeping us from reaching our full potential. A young mother struggles with insecurity and fear and seems unable to make even the simplest decision. A corporate executive has marriage and financial problems keeping him tied up in knots, hampering his productivity and focus. A small church feels God calling them to plant other churches, but the enormity of the task is daunting.

Giants come in all forms. Some are obstacles, internal and external, blocking our forward progress; and some are opportunities, desires, and dreams, threatening to overwhelm us. And we wonder if we're up for the task. The question is, How do we face them and ultimately conquer them?

*Giant Killers* is rooted in the studies of emotional intelligence by Dr. Reuven Bar-On<sup>1</sup> and Daniel Goleman.<sup>2</sup> *Emotional intelligence* is a set of emotional and social skills that collectively establish how well we perceive and express ourselves, develop and maintain social relationships, cope with challenges, make decisions, and handle stress. These concepts, when combined with the power of God's grace, will enable believers to not only overcome any obstacle, but will prepare them to seize opportunities as well. What better place to see this played out than in the life of King David as he faced Goliath and led Israel. So if you want to take on the giants in your life, then read on and let's explore how each of us can become a giant killer.

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<sup>1</sup> As described in Steven J. Stein and Howard E. Book, *The EQ Edge: Emotional Intelligence and Your Success* (Mississauga, Ontario: Wiley, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: 10th Anniversary Edition* (New York, NY: Random House Publishing Group, 2012).