

I Samuel Story of David and Goliath
As retold by Rev. Kathie Pownall

Goliath of Gath was very tall -
Over six feet and counting.
He wore bronze armor – quite heavy to bear
With spear in hand he was daunting.

Goliath's army – the Philistines
Were facing across the valley.
The Israelites standing upon a hill
Bearing their arms to rally.

A challenge was issued from *Big Boy* himself
To find an opponent to fight.
The winner would take control of both armies;
The loser might be quite contrite.

Jesse of Judah had eight sons,
Three of which fought in the war.
His young son David - a shepherd boy
Provided esprit de corps

He left his dad Jesse
And took bread and cheese
To give to his brothers - the soldiers;
But as he arrived the battle cry sounded
And everyone stiffened their shoulders.

Goliath came out and issued his challenge
David perked up – paid attention.
He wanted to know what the winner would get.
His brother Eliab tried prevention.

The Israelites trembled in horror
Running quickly away in fear.
Saul tried caution'ng young David
Creating a tense atmosphere.

David reminded him of his prowess
Chasing wild beasts from the sheep
He begged for permission to get that Goliath
He trusted the Lord for his keep.

So David approached that formidable giant
With no armor - there he stood
The helmet and mail were too much weight
With stones and a sling David could.

As David approached Goliath
Who distained him – finding him fair.
He cursed the gods of young David
And threatened his flesh to the air.

David was quite so confident
Trusting his God to provide
That he could strike down this big man.
His words left nothing implied.

The Philistine drew nearer to David
And David ran closer to him.
He pulled out a stone and he slung it
It hit the man's head. It was grim.

David used the man's own sword
To cut off the head for victory.
He took it back to the city
To prove there had been no trickery.

What do we learn from this story?
I hope it is **not** to kill,
But remember to call on your real strength
God will provide; yes, God will.



“The Power of Little”
Sermon, June 24, 2018
I Samuel 17 & Mark 4: 35

This week we have felt the power of the giant and we have trembled in the storm. Today’s lectionary provides us with images I find especially applicable to the time in which we are living. Some people feel small and powerless and others shake in fear while we might really feel Jesus is asleep in the boat. There is much to ponder.

Samuel Wells is an English priest known for his preaching, work in Christian ethics, and other issues of faith. He asks us to consider the source of David’s power against Goliath.

We live in a nation of over 300 million people and I guarantee that most of us have had times in our lives that we feel small – that we feel like David might have felt.

The theme of feeling like the little guy or girl is a popular one. That’s why this story from I Samuel is found in the Jewish, Christian and Muslim scriptures. It catches our cultural imagination

We have the big beefy Goliath and the unknown shepherd boy David facing off. David waves aside the awkward armor offered him by King Saul, and, take five little smooth stones and a slingshot, and leaves Goliath dead on the ground.

David, the youngest son of Jesse was small in stature compared to Goliath. The stones he took out of his pouch were small. There are times that small things really matter. In the Bible there is a story about a mustard seed – that’s small. The words are: *“The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field; which indeed is smaller than all seeds. But when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches.”*

Stories such as these remind us of the promise of little things. At Mug and Muffin this week we talked about the two stories you heard this morning – David and Goliath and the disciples in the boat on the stormy sea afraid for their lives while Jesus lay comfortably asleep. We talked about feeling small and helpless and afraid in the midst of the crisis of families and children being separated.

Many people are feeling powerless and hopeless right now. The problems of our country and the world seem so huge, and we can feel very small. Evil can be a formidable opponent.

Every time we turn on the news or log onto social media, we’re buried under an avalanche of fear and suffering, no matter how many happy memes and cat videos we see. The weights of sorrow and frustration and helplessness can become absolutely overwhelming.

This could lead us to give up and let our feelings of insignificance win!

I read a quote this week that I felt helpful. It was written by Greek poet Dinos Christianopoulus and has become a slogan for young activists all over the globe. It reminds us powerfully of mustard plants, refugee children, and a certain first-century political prisoner executed and placed in a tomb. *“They tried to bury us; they didn’t know we were seeds.”*

So skip from little David and little stones, through the little boat where disciples huddled in a big sea in a big storm and consider “seeds.” It seems like an appropriate time in life and possibly history to dwell on how to be a little - yet powerful seed.

I came upon ideas as to how to accomplish this from a blog I recently read written by author Susan Palwick. “Rickety Contrivances of Doing Good”

HOW TO BE A SEED:

1. Allow yourself to rest in darkness for a while. Contemplate. Pray. That’s how you’ll gain the strength to grow.
2. Send out roots to anchor yourself to community. That’s what we do when we gather together in groups – such as Mug and Muffin. Some of us gathered in a candlelight vigil this week.
3. Embrace the gifts -- nutrients, water, shelter – whatever your surroundings offer you.
4. Remember where you’re going and claim it; you are going upwards, toward the light. Remember what you’ll do when you get there: expand, embrace those who seek sanctuary in your branches, flower and produce good fruit. Make more seeds.

We seem to be living in crisis mode much of the time. And many kinds of seeds are needed. Palwick suggests praying, voting, contacting representatives, speaking against unjust policies, volunteering at various organizations such schools, church, homeless shelters and refugee resettlement agencies; loving our children, loving other people’s children, donating time, money and even canned soup.

The list is endless. Everything counts, no matter how tiny. Enough small seeds can and will create gardens, meadows, forests. Every act of love is one more step towards the Best Big Thing, and that is the loving Kingdom ordained by God. AMEN