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The teeny, weenie ... true king

Samuel anoints David, from 1 Samuel 16

GOD'S PEOPLE had a new land. Now they wanted a king.

"But God is your King," Samuel told them.

"He is the one who looks after you best."

"We want a real king!" they said. "One we can see!"

God knew that a king might not be kind to his people or look after them as well as he

would. But God's people didn't care;

they wanted a king and they wanted him now!

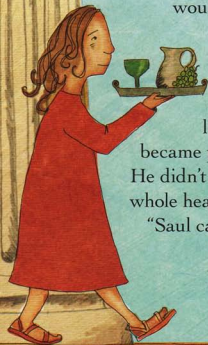
So God gave them a king.

He was called Saul and he seemed like a good king — at first. But he

became proud and stopped listening to God.

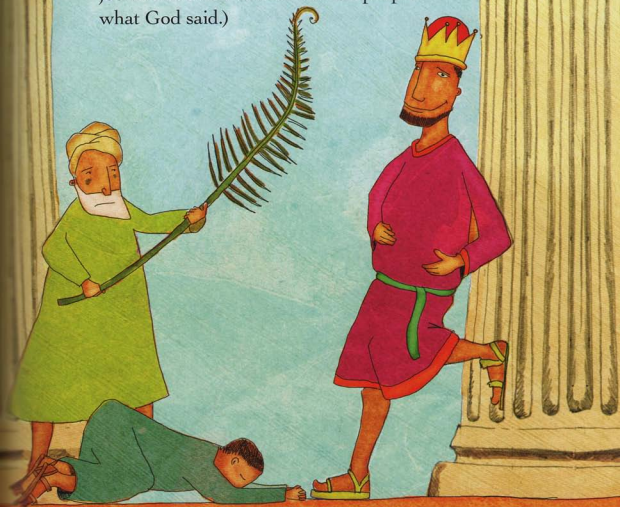
He didn't obey God. Or love God with his whole heart.

"Saul can't help me with my plan," God said.



“I need a king who loves me and will teach my people to love me. I need a true king.” God had just the one in mind.

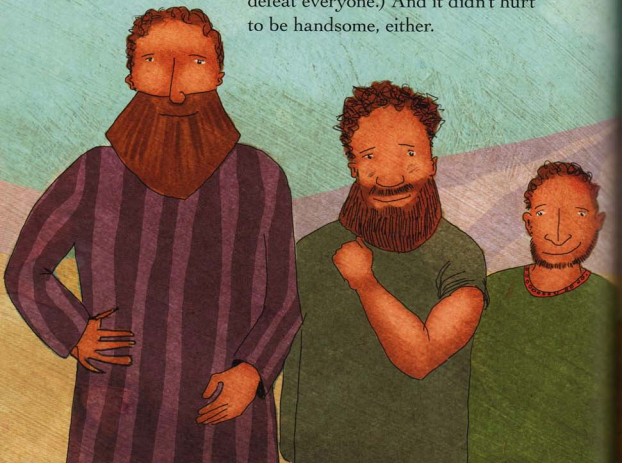
“Go to Bethlehem,” God told Samuel. “You’ll find the new king there.” (Samuel’s job was to listen to God and tell people what God said.)



So Samuel went to the little town of Bethlehem. God told Samuel to go to Jesse's house. God was going to choose one of Jesse's sons to be the new king.

Jesse had seven strong sons.

Now in those days if you were going to be the king, you didn't have to be the richest or the cleverest (although that was always nice). You had to look like a king, which meant you had to be the tallest and the strongest. (So you could carry the longest swords and biggest armor and defeat everyone.) And it didn't hurt to be handsome, either.



Samuel asked Jesse to bring him each son in turn. So Jesse brought the oldest, tallest, strongest son. *This must be the new king*, Samuel thought. *He looks like a king.*

But God didn't choose him. "You're thinking about what he looks like on the outside," God told Samuel. "But I am looking at his heart, what he's like on the inside."

So Jesse showed Samuel his next oldest, tallest, strongest son. But God didn't choose him either. In fact, God didn't choose any of the seven sons.

Samuel said, "Is that all?"

Jesse laughed. "Oh, well, there's the youngest one, but he's just the weakling of the family, he's only teeny —"
"Bring him," said Samuel.





Jesse's youngest son came running up, and God spoke quietly to Samuel, "This is the one!"

His name was David.

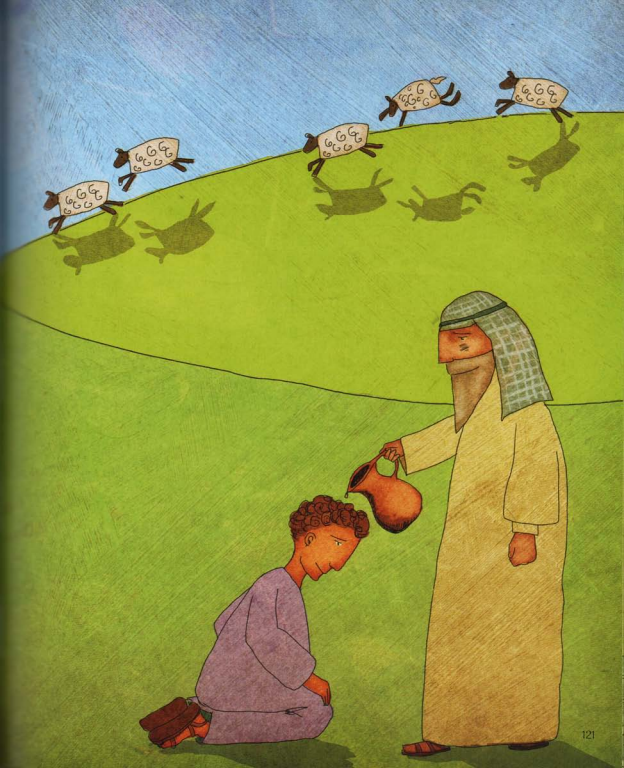
"He has a heart like mine," God said. "It is full of love. He will help me with my Secret Rescue Plan. And one of his children's children's children will be the King. And that King will rule the world forever."

Samuel anointed David's head with oil — which was a special way to show that you are God's chosen king. "You will be the new king one day," Samuel told him.

And, sure enough, when he grew up, David became king.

God chose David to be king because God was getting his people ready for an even greater King who was coming.

Once again, God would say, "Go to Bethlehem. You'll find the new King there." And there, one starry night in Bethlehem, in the town of David, three Wise Men would find him.



The young hero and the horrible giant

David and Goliath, from 1 Samuel 17



GOD'S PEOPLE HAD SOME scary enemies, but the Philistines were the scariest of them all. And now the Philistines had come to fight them.

The Philistines had a secret weapon, called "Goliath." Goliath was a terrifying soldier, and — worst of all — a GIANT! A giant so strong, and so tall, and so scary that no one had ever been able to fight him — and live to tell the tale.

So, there they were: the Philistines standing on the top of one hill; God's people standing on top of the other. Every day, Goliath came out and shouted, "Send your best soldier to fight me! If he wins, we will be your slaves. But if I win, you will be our slaves!" No one spoke. No one moved.

“Chickens!” Goliath bellowed. “Your God can’t save you! I’ll rip your heads off and have you on toast!” His beady, greedy eyes glowered at them hungrily from under his horrible helmet — as if any minute he really might just gobble them all up. And he laughed his terrible laugh. “Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha” it boomed, echoing horribly around and around the dry, dry valley.





Well, Goliath might just as well have been a green, slimy monster with three heads because God's people froze with fear. Their eyes glazed over, and they turned deathly pale. They knew if someone didn't do something quick, if someone didn't save them —

But God would do something. He would send someone to save them.

Now, you remember that David was the youngest son of Jesse? Well his brothers were soldiers in the army. One day, when David brought his brothers their lunches, he saw Goliath — and he saw how scared everyone was.

"Don't be afraid!" David said. "I'll fight him for you!"

"You're only a little shepherd boy," the king said, "and Goliath is a great soldier. How will you fight him?"

"God will help me!" David said.

So the king gave David his royal armor to wear, but it was too heavy and too big and David couldn't even walk. "I won't need this," David said.

Instead, David picked out five smooth stones from the stream — one, two, three, four, five — took his slingshot and walked towards Goliath. Step. Step. Step.



Goliath walked towards David. THUD. THUD. THUD. THUD. “You?” Goliath peered down at the small boy. “I’m little!” David shouted up to him. “But God is great!”

Goliath laughed an even bigger laugh than usual. “HAAAA-HA-HA-HAAAA!” it went.

With just one swing of his giant sword, Goliath could finish the boy off.

But David kept going. “It isn’t how strong you are or how many swords and spears you have that will save you — it is God who saves you! This is God’s battle. And God always wins his battles!”

David put a stone in his sling, swung it around — and let it go. The little stone flew WHIZZ like a bullet through the air and struck Goliath THUD right between the eyes. Goliath stopped laughing ...





He stumbled ... and staggered ... and CRASH! fell dead.

When the Philistines saw Goliath was dead, they ran away. And when God's people saw them running away, they cheered. God had saved his people. David was a hero!



Many years later, God would send his people another young Hero to fight for them. And to save them.

But this Hero would fight the greatest battle the world has ever known.

