

# Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”  
Isaiah 40:31*



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## Overcoming Negativity

Sometimes it seems like the world conspires to beat us down. For too many of us, the conspiracy is successful. But there is a way to overcome the negativity of our critics.

“So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him” (1 Sam. 17:50).

The story of David’s victory over Goliath is a favorite children’s story. But there is a deeper lesson here that we adults need to learn. David’s victory came in the face of an avalanche of negativity that should have discouraged him from even trying. How David overcame that negativity is the real story.

David’s rank in his family was the first strike against him. He was the youngest of eight sons, so while David’s three oldest brothers were serving in King Saul’s army, their father had David running errands (17:17-18). Military service was out of the question for this boy. He was too young.

The second factor working against David, although not directed at him personally, was formidable. While delivering food to his brothers in the ranks, David witnessed the entire army of Israel flee in terror from before Goliath (17:24). There is nothing that kills morale more thoroughly than mass

panic on the battlefield. To witness the whole army turn and run away in the face of their enemy should have scared David silly. What chance did he have of making a difference?

When David inquired about the Philistine giant, his oldest brother, Eliab, did his part to discourage David from taking action. Using language that every little brother is accustomed to hearing, Eliab put David in his place: “Why have you come here? . . . I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle” (17:28). David was a nuisance, a brat who had no business among warriors.

Still, David was confident that he could beat Goliath, and was brought before King Saul. The king quickly sized up David’s confidence as youthful bragging. “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he is a man of war from his youth” (17:33). Sending this lad into battle against a well-armed and well-trained giant was insanity. He would not be responsible for sending this boy to a needless death.

Somehow David overcame all these obstacles and finally stood face to face before Goliath himself. What David had seen and heard before was nothing compared to the scorn that was heaped upon him now. Goliath was insulted that the Israelites had sent a boy to fight him: “He disdained him; for he was only a youth” (17:42). The Philistine cursed David by his gods, and promised a gruesome outcome: “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field” (17:44).

Looking at these two combatants, most observers would agree with David’s detractors. There was no way he could win this fight. But David refused to listen to all the negative assessments, and accomplished the impossible.

What happened that day in the valley of Elah is a testimony to the power of *faith*. David’s confidence was not in himself, but in God. “The battle is the Lord’s, and He will give you into our hands” (17:47). When we have that kind of faith in God we, too, can push aside the negativity that surrounds us, and defeat the giants that stand in our way.

– David King