

Junior Soldiers

Unit 6 : Lesson 7



Who has God created me to be?

PURPOSE : For the children to explore and understand that God has made each of them in a specific way and they should use all they have to worship and serve Him.

“I cannot go in these,” he said to Saul, “because I am not used to them.” So he took them off. Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd’s bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine?

1 Samuel 17:39b-40 (CEV)

Consider & Prepare

Read:

1 Samuel 17:31-40
1 Samuel 16-17
2 Samuel 2:1-7
Exodus 4:2-5

This lesson is part of a series, Lesson 7 and Lesson 8 go together and look at the story of David and Goliath and how God used what David had to do great things for Him. The children will be exploring what they have as well as how God might use what they have to worship and serve Him.

God has created each of us as unique individuals. He has given each of us a particular set of characteristics, gifts, talents and experiences that help form us into a special and unique person. If we are open to God, He can use all that we have and all that we have experienced to make a difference for Him.

God used David’s abilities and his courage to do His work in the story of David and Goliath. What other people said, thought and feared, was different to David because of his relationship with God and the special gifts and experiences David had.

To give some background to the key message of this lesson you might also like to read and consider the story of Moses who was challenged by God to use what he had in his hands to do God’s work (Exodus 4:2-5).

NOTE: For the ‘Connecting In’ activity, ensure that children bend their knees and DO NOT attempt to move the heavy objects far from the floor/ table.

During this lesson, keep an eye, especially, on children that may have low self-esteem; it would be easy in this lesson for some kids to say that they do nothing well and have no talents. Be quick to stop any children, unfortunately or naively, who may seek to confirm such negative thoughts and comments.

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- Prepare to share a short story about a time in your life when you did something that showed courage; a time when you did something that other people thought you wouldn't be able to do
- Mark a distance of 9ft (2.74m) on the floor by drawing two chalk lines or using two strips of masking tape. If your ceilings are high enough you could mark this height on the wall instead.
- Prepare a sack of rice, potatoes etc. that weighs 6kg.
- Prepare a sack or another object that weighs 56kg. This is about the weight of an average-sized 12 year-old. You could find someone that is roughly the right weight and use them for this activity.

For 'The Main Thing'

- Bibles
- Sheets of A4/A3 paper or sheets of butchers paper
- A range of coloured playdough or paper Magiclay or plasticine if you choose this option
- Textas, pencils or crayons
- Coloured sticky notes

For 'Tying In'

- Print off copies of the 'Who has God made me to be?' charts
- Pens or markers for filling in the chart
- ENSURE YOU TAKE COPIES OF THESE AFTER THE CHILDREN HAVE COMPLETED THEM as you will need them for Lesson 8

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the Home & Beyond cards for each child.
- The children will take home their 'Who has God made me to be?' charts to talk over with their Big Bud and family.



Connecting In

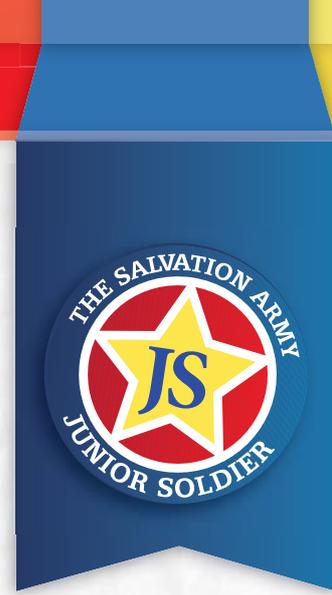
Wearing David's shoes...

Explain to the children that you would like them to share a story of a time when they did something that took courage; something that other people thought they wouldn't be able to do. (You will need to be prepared to share your own story of when you may have faced a situation like this, to help kick off this section.)

After the children have had an opportunity to share, remind them that God has created each of us as unique individuals. He has given each of us a particular set of characteristics, gifts, talents and experiences that help to form us into a special and unique person. If we are open to God, He can use all that we have and all that we have experienced to make a difference for Him.

Link... Today we are going to explore the story of someone you are probably familiar with, who had lots of people think that he was not able to do something—a little bit like some of the stories that we have just been talking about. David, who was only a boy, fought a massive soldier named Goliath. He was able to do this for God because of who God had made him to be, because of the gifts, abilities and experiences that he had had. It took great courage for him to do this but also trust in God. Let's have a look at some of the facts about the story before we share in it together.

- Goliath was 9ft tall. That's 2.74m. I've marked this distance on the floor to show what it would look like to be that tall. Would anyone like to lie down with their feet on the first mark to see how much taller Goliath was?
- Goliath was so strong that he could use massive weapons and pieces of armour to protect himself.
- This sack weighs 6kg. That's how much just his spearhead weighed. Who would like to try to carry it across the room from one side to the other? Goliath was able to lift that above his head and throw or thrust it to kill enemy soldiers.
- This sack (child/object) weighs 56kg. That's how much Goliath's coat of armour weighed. Would anyone like to try to lift it off the floor/ table? Make sure you bend your knees!



Goliath was huge and strong but David had the courage to face up to him. David knew who God had created him to be and he knew the work God wanted him to do. He fought Goliath and he won.

The Main Thing

David's story in four parts...

Children and the leader open their Bibles to 1 Sam 17.

This is the story we will be reading today, but if you want to read more of David's story it is in 1 Samuel 16 through to 2 Samuel 24, and then into 1 Kings! Today we will just look at one section of his story.

In exploring the story today you might like to approach it in a couple of different ways:

- The children can individually draw the four scenes of the story that you are going to explore today. They can take a sheet of A4/A3 paper and fold it in half and then fold it in half again to create four sections in which to draw the four scenes.
- You can get the children to work in small groups and give them 4 sheets of A3/A4 paper to draw the four scenes together as a group, having everyone contribute to the images.
- Or you might like to have the children work in small groups, provide them with some paper on which to create their scenes using playdough, paper Magiclay or plasticine as the story is read.

NOTE: It's okay to read part of the story while they are still drawing. This may help children to stay focused.

NOTE: For children who are younger or have vision impairment, use a separate sheet of paper for each scene and allow a little more time.

Setting the scene...

Close your eyes for a moment and imagine a wide, green, grassy valley. There are hills on either side of the valley. Camped at the top of one of these hills is the Israelite army. Camped at the top of the hill on the other side of the valley is the Philistine army. This is the setting for our story and where we will begin today.

SCENE 1 – (As you are sharing this part of the story ask the children to draw/create the setting that they have just imagined above.)

The Israelite army was filled with brave, strong soldiers, who were used to fighting wars to defend their towns. This time the Philistines had come to attack and the Israelites had responded by moving out to protect their people.

But the Philistines had men amongst them who were said to have 'giant' blood in them. They were huge. One in particular had become their hero. His name was? (*Give the children a chance to answer.*) That's right, Goliath. Goliath was big! Goliath was strong! Goliath was proud! And Goliath was mean!

Each day Goliath put on his armour, stalked down into the valley and shouted at the army of Israel: 'Why are you even bothering to prepare for battle? I'm the best soldier in our army. I dare you to send one of your soldiers to fight me!' He teased, 'Go on, choose your best! If he can kill me, our people will be your

slaves. But if I kill him, your people will be our slaves. Here and now I challenge you, your whole measly army; choose someone who is brave enough to fight me!

Now King Saul and his army could hear these threats and taunts but they did nothing. Maybe they were hiding out in their tents with their knees shaking, terrified of Goliath. Maybe they were just smart enough to know they didn't stand a chance and were waiting, hoping that Goliath would catch a virus! Whatever the reason, they let Goliath go on making his daily challenge.

(Ask the children to add Goliath into their scene. If they are drawing get them to add a speech bubble and include something he might have said. For a speech bubble, the children might like to use a bright coloured sticky note, these come in a variety of shapes and colours.)

In the meantime, a boy called David was home with his dad, Jesse, in Bethlehem, looking after the sheep. Three of his seven older brothers were off with the army and one day, since there were no mobile phones, Twitter or internet, Jesse sent David off to deliver a message to his brothers and check on the progress of the battle.

So the next morning David left someone else to watch the sheep and headed off to the battle zone. David found his brothers and was chatting with them when Goliath showed up again 'Why are you even bothering to prepare for battle? I'm the best soldier in our army. I dare you to send one of your soldiers to fight me!' He teased, 'Go on, choose your best! If he can kill me, our people will be your slaves. But if I kill him, your people will be our slaves. Here and now I challenge you, your whole measly army; choose someone who is brave enough to fight me!'

David looked around, watching excitedly to see who would be chosen. But his brothers ran off, scared, along with the other soldiers. David was astounded. 'Are you really going to let him speak to us like that?' He asked some soldiers nearby. 'We belong to God. We have him on our side. Who is this big thug to mock our God and his people? I'll take him on. I'll knock him down and cut off his head.'

David's oldest brother, Eliab, heard what David was saying. 'You little pipsqueak! Who do you think you are? Go back where you belong, playing with the sheep back home with daddy. I bet you've run off and left them to fend for themselves. You are such a little brat. You just came to watch the fighting, didn't you?' 'Now what have I done wrong?' said David, 'I just want a chance to teach that big bully a lesson.'

(Ask the children to add David into the scene next to Goliath to show how much bigger he was than David.)

Debrief questions for Scene 1:

- What did David's dad, Jesse think about who David was?
- What did David's brother, Eliab, say about who he was?
- David wasn't a soldier, like his brothers. Was he being brave or being foolish about fighting Goliath?



SCENE 2 – (As you are sharing this part of the story ask the children to draw/create David talking to King Saul and trying on the armour that was too big for him. If they are drawing include some speech bubbles showing what they might have been saying to each other. If they are creating with clay get them to share some phrases with each other about what they might have been saying.)

1 Samuel 17: 31–54 (CEV)

Some soldiers overheard David talking, so they told Saul what David had said. Saul sent for David, and David came. 'Your Majesty,' he said, 'this Philistine shouldn't turn us into cowards. I'll go out and fight him myself!' 'You don't have a chance against him,' Saul replied. 'You're only a boy and he's been a soldier all his life.'



But David told him, 'Your Majesty, I take care of my father's sheep. And when one of them is dragged off by a lion or a bear, I go after it and beat the wild animal until it lets the sheep go. If the wild animal turns and attacks me, I grab it by the throat and kill it. Sir, I have killed lions and bears that way, and I can kill this worthless Philistine. He shouldn't have made fun of the army of the living God! The Lord has rescued me from the claws of lions and bears, and he will keep me safe from the hands of this Philistine.'

'All right,' Saul answered, 'go ahead and fight him. And I hope the Lord will help you.'

Saul had his own military clothes and armour put on David, and he gave David a bronze helmet to wear. David strapped on a sword and tried to walk around, but he was not used to wearing those things. 'I can't move with all this stuff on,' David said. 'I'm just not used to it.'



Debrief questions for Scene 2:

- What did King Saul say about who David was?
- What did David say and know about himself?
- What did David say and know about God?



SCENE 3 – (As you are sharing this part of the story ask the children to draw/create David fighting Goliath. If they are drawing get them to include a speech bubble and what David might have been saying. If they are creating with clay get the children to share a phrase with each other about what David might have been saying.)

David took off the armour and picked up his shepherd's stick. He went out to a stream and picked up five smooth rocks and put them in his leather bag. Then with his sling in his hand, he went straight toward Goliath.

Goliath came toward David, walking behind the soldier who was carrying his shield. When Goliath saw that David was just a healthy, good-looking boy, he made fun of him. 'Do you think I'm a dog?' Goliath asked. 'Is that why you've come after me with a stick?' He cursed David in the name of the Philistine gods and shouted, 'Come on! When I'm finished with you, I'll feed you to the birds and wild animals!'

David answered: 'You've come out to fight me with a sword and a spear and a dagger. But I've come out to fight you in the name of the Lord All-Powerful. He is the God of Israel's army, and you have insulted him too! Today the Lord will help me defeat you. I'll knock you down and cut off your head, and I'll feed the bodies of the other Philistine soldiers to the birds and wild animals. Then the whole world will know that Israel has a real God. Everybody here will see that the Lord doesn't need swords or spears to save his people. The Lord always wins his battles, and he will help us to defeat you.'

When Goliath started forward, David ran toward him. He put a rock in his sling and swung the sling around by its straps. When he let go of one strap, the rock flew out and hit Goliath on the forehead. It cracked his skull, and he fell face down on the ground. David defeated Goliath with a sling and a rock. He killed him without even using a sword. David ran over and pulled out Goliath's sword. Then he used it to cut off Goliath's head. Ooooh, gross!

Debrief questions for Scene 3:

- When David spoke to Goliath, do you think he (David) would have sounded a bit scared?
- What was David trying to prove to the Philistines about God?
- When David hit Goliath with his first stone, was it just a lucky shot?

SCENE 4 – (As you are sharing this part of the story ask the children to draw/create the Israelites returning with their loot and David returning as the winner of the battle. If they are drawing get the children to include some speech bubbles about what is being said. If they are creating with clay get the children to share some phrases that they think might have been said.)

Now you might think that's the end of the story but it's not quite done. When the Philistine soldiers saw that their unbeatable hero had been killed they turned and ran just as fast as they could go. The Israelites were not about to let them go that easily. They let out a wild battle cry, 'Yaaaaahhhh!' and chased them. When they returned from chasing the Philistines, the Israelites took all sorts of goodies from their deserted camp site. And David came back as the winner carrying Goliath's head. Yuck!



Debrief questions for Scene 4:

- Why did the brave Philistine army suddenly turn chicken?
- Do you think David would have thought of himself as a hero and champion? (*No, he would have praised God.*)
- How do you think David would have gone if he was wearing heavy armour and trying to use Saul's sword?



David knew who God had created him to be. Because of this, he wasn't afraid to do God's work, even when other people said he couldn't do it. He chose not to do what the other Israelites were doing. Instead of running and hiding he went out to fight. He chose not to do things someone else's way. King Saul tried to dress him in armour and send him out with a sword but David knew that wasn't the right way for him to fight. He chose not to let what other people were saying define who he was. He used what God had given him to do God's work and to do it well.

We can learn a lot from the way that David went about using all that God had given him and how God had made him to worship and serve his God. I wonder if you know the special things that God has given you and the special way in which He has made you. I wonder if you will be willing to trust God to use these things to worship and serve Him when and where needed.

Tying In

Who has God made me to be?

Ask the children:

- What do other people like and respect about you?
- What can you do well?
- What do you love to do?
- Are there things that you have done because God has asked you to? If so, what happened?

Explain that our gifts, talents, characteristics and experiences help to make us 'one of a kind' and so very special to God.

We are going to create our own 'Who has God made me to be?' chart and include the following things: gifts, talents, characteristics, experiences and other special stuff. Let's look together at what these things mean and then help each other as we fill them out.

Gifts: These are the things that God's Holy Spirit gives us to help us to do his work. For example if we read 1 Corinthians 12:7–11 it tells us these things. Some of us can speak wisely, while others have great faith or the power to heal the sick, or the power to work mighty miracles. Some of us get messages from God, and some of us recognize when God's Spirit is present. And we read in Romans 12:6–8 about gifts such as serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading and showing mercy. You might have noticed that while you like helping the leaders to set up or put things away, someone else here is good at talking to people about Jesus, while another person prays a lot. These are all different spiritual gifts!

Talents: These are the other special things that we can do well and usually love doing like cooking, playing sports, drawing, reading, making or creating things or something extra special, out of the ordinary etc.

Characteristics: These reveal how we act, think and behave. Some examples of characteristics are being kind, cheerful, generous, loving, helping others, cooperative, honest, hardworking and patient.

Experiences: These are the special things that we have done or been a part of that affect 'who' we are, how we think and how we sometimes look at the world. For example: if you have lived in lots of different places you might have become very good at making friends. If you have travelled to other countries you might be more interested in different cultures. If you have spent time in hospital you might be extra understanding of people who are sick etc.

Other special stuff: This is anything else that you can think of that makes you different or stand out from others. Things that people might say to describe who you are.

Allow each child some time to fill in a 'Who has God made me to be?' chart, it would be good if you can help and affirm them in their gifts, talents etc. as well as encouraging the other children to have input in affirming the things that they see as being special about others in the group.

Prayer time

Ask the children to name one thing about who God has created them to be that they are happy about. Ask the children to each share with a partner something they like and value about that friend.

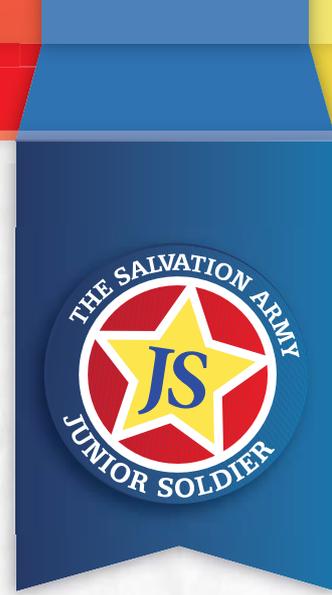
Jesus, we can see that you have made each of us different from everyone else. We are unique and so special to you. Thanks for being so creative! Please help us to value the differences in each other and in ourselves. We know that you have made us in a special way so that we can worship and serve you. Amen

Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

Talk with your Big Bud or another adult about your 'Who has God made me to be?' chart.

- Share a story with them about something you have done that took courage.
- Show them the things that make you special.
- Ask them to pray for you to be all that God has created you to be, so that you can worship and serve God in your own unique way.



Home & Beyond

Talk with your Big Bud or another adult about your 'Who has God made me to be?' chart.

- Share a story with them about something you have done that made me to be?' chart.
- Show them the things that make you special.
- Ask them to pray for you to be all that God has created you to be, so that you can worship and serve God in your own unique way.


Junior Soldiers

Home & Beyond

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Junior Soldiers

Name:

Characteristics

Talents

Experiences

Other

Special

Stuff

Gifts