

Some thoughts...

- When we left David he had been anointed and filled with the Holy Spirit
 - our new section begins with the contrasting situation for Saul
 - the Spirit of the Lord had left him and an evil spirit 'tormented' him, as the NIV translates it
 - (possibly better 'terrorised' him)
 - whether it was immediately obvious to them at the time, what has happened is clear now: when David was anointed God withdrew his Spirit and the Spirit's gifts from Saul

And its that contrast that marks the passage:

- with the evil spirit - who brought relief?
- the response to Goliath's taunting (David's brothers as well as Saul)
- the thing with the armour (man's strength / God's strength)
- the response to victory (David - v.45-47; Saul v.55)
- Where does all that come from? The Holy Spirit...

- It is possible to have shared in the Holy Spirit and yet remain spiritually dead and never to have been born anew. It is possible to profess faith and regard yourself as a believer, to know a lot of and about Scripture, but still be dead in trespasses and sins. David was changed by the power of God, Saul was not.

- When David was anointed as king there was no public acclamation and he would not ascend the throne for another ten years or so. Back with his sheep he might have wondered whether his anointing was real. Should he force his way to the throne? Saul was already on the throne. Would he abdicate in favour of David the shepherd boy? Hardly! Only through faith and patience do God's children inherit his promises (Hebrews 6:12). They are graces of the Holy Spirit, not stoical resignation to what will be, will be. True faith prays and works towards the promises of God. Patience doesn't waste time, it redeems it. They look to God doing the impossible.

- David wasn't left with his sheep for long. The Lord brought him to Saul's court and to the battlefield of Elah. Here in this valley David would meet and defeat Goliath the giant of Gath. In this way David would gain renown overnight. The shepherd boy became a national hero.

- Every one of us has to ask at some time the question:
 - 'Am I like Saul or like David? How can I tell whether I am a true believer and not just self-deceived?'
 - John gives us the answer in John 14:15 - those who love the Lord keep his commandments
 - here is the basic test...
- Saul failed this test time and time again

- David is brought to Saul because his music can calm the king:
 - however, this easing of Saul's problem did not get to the root
 - Saul did not seek the Lord or make peace with God
 - he didn't repent - his servants merely prescribed a sedative
- (But it got David into the palace!)
 - The story of David's fight with Goliath is one of the best known stories of the Bible:
 - inevitably it has been romanticised - to many it is merely a story of the small triumphing over the big
 - but David's endowment with the Spirit of God in power is a contrast not with Goliath, but with Saul from whom the Spirit had withdrawn
- A shepherd-musician was mightier than the king because the Spirit of the Lord was upon him

- David was evidently too young for military service. The title 'armourbearer' is an honorary one. Hearing Goliath's challenge and seeing the fear of the army and the king, David volunteered to take up that challenge. He didn't see the contest as a matter of might and right, or even of skill. He saw it as a theological issue. "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" David was speaking for God. As the covenant people of God they had no right to cower before the enemies of the Lord. The problem Israel had was a problem of faith - or rather, the lack of it. The Philistines were defying God. Many of your problems are essentially theological. They must be tackled with theological truth. This is faith at work.
- Saul saw the problem in non-faith terms:
 - 'You're only a lad set about a man's work'
 - David's answer to Saul's pessimistic materialism was again theological - '**The Lord who delivered me ... will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.**'
 - David was ready to give his life for the Lord's cause and to maintain his word
 - is that me/us?
- *David here foreshadows Christ's willingness to give up his life for the honour of God's name and to save God's people*
- Goliath cursed David by his gods. David's reply was testimony and prophecy. Goliath invoked false gods; David came in the name of the Lord Almighty. There was no doubt. Goliath would die and the Philistine army would be scattered. All would know there was a God in Israel.

Conclusion

- Do we have the same resolve of faith?
 - the victory was God's victory
 - he can do the same with us
- **What is our Goliath?**
 - **will we face it in the power of the Holy Spirit, like David?**
 - **or powerless, like Saul?**