

**TEXT** 1 Samuel 17:19-51

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE** 1 Samuel 14:1-16

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to tell of ways in which God wants His people to be courageous, and that He offers them the strength necessary to face difficult situations by the overcoming of fear.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law. — Joshua 1:7

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. — Joshua 1:9

**ANSWER  
TITLE:** **How Can I Face This?**  
**SEARCH  
TITLE:** **Courage**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

The first reference to giants in the Bible is found in the Book of Genesis. However, this race of giants perished in the Flood. The next reference to giants is found in Deuteronomy 2:20. The Ammonites conquered them and drove them out of the territory God had given to the descendants of Ammon. It is possible that the Anakims, whose great stature struck such fear to the hearts of the ten spies, were offspring of these people. The spies felt as though they were grasshoppers in their sight.

When the Children of Israel were on the march to the land of Canaan, they conquered Og, king of Bashan, who was a giant. The Word says that he had a bedstead of iron that was nine cubits long and four wide! Most of the Anakims were destroyed as Joshua conquered the land of Canaan, but it specifically mentions that there were giants left in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. Also Caleb was given the mountain where the Anakims dwelt and he drove out the three remaining giants and occupied Hebron.

The giant Goliath came from the city of Gath. He was the champion of the Philistine army and defied the army of Israel for forty days. It is a sad commentary that neither King Saul nor any of his men would take up the challenge. A young shepherd boy who trusted in the living God came upon the scene, took up the challenge, and slew the giant. Years later in a battle with the Philistines, King David was, himself, beset by a giant and his nephew came to his aid and killed the giant.

It is very unlikely that we will ever have to engage in physical combat with a giant, but we do have a formidable adversary, Satan. The Apostle Peter says that we must “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). So it is imperative that we walk close to the Lord as there is no way we could defeat the devil in our own strength.

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Courage

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## RESPONSES

1. These experiences gave David confidence that the Lord would deliver him from the hand of the Philistine. Note with the students, in verses 37, 46, and 47 of our text, that David was taking no credit for himself. His strength was completely centered in the Lord, and he acted accordingly. He was coming in the Name of the Lord of hosts, whom the Philistines were defying. Discuss with your students how they, too, when faced with trials or troublesome problems, can gain courage and strength by rehearsing past deliverances, by recognizing the power of the Lord, and by standing in the strength of His name.

2. David had great courage because he was wholly obedient to the Lord. Saul was fearful because he had disobeyed the Lord, and he had no confidence that God was with him. When one knows that God is with him, he can be courageous. If there is a feeling of condemnation in one's heart, then there is fear when a test comes.

3. Have the students attempt to place themselves in David's situation. He could not fight with unfamiliar equipment. He was comfortable with his sling and shepherd's bag and stones, and the knowledge that God was with him. If we look to God, He will give us strength to meet the situations we face, trusting in Him and not the unreliable strategies of the world.

4. Discuss with the students the fact that we have the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and the shield of faith, for protection from the enemy. These and the other parts of the Gospel armor should give us courage to go out and fight for the Lord. You might wish to bring out that Paul was one who used this armor to good effect, and through it gained the victory though he faced beatings, stoning, hunger, thirst, and many other perils. See 2 Corinthians 11:24-28.

The challenge of Goliath stirred a response in David's soul, and his courage mounted as he thought of the One who neither slumbers nor sleeps. A lion, a bear, a giant—what did it matter so long as God was David's Keeper? Up through the chain of command David's words were rehearsed, until Saul sent for him. "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." With a prayer, a sling, a shepherd's crook, and five smooth stones from the brook, David ran to meet Goliath. With faith and courage in his God, David prevailed over the giant of Gath.

1. David had slain both the lion and the bear that came to take lambs from his father's flock. In what way did these previous experiences help David?

2. What was the difference between the attitude of David and that of King Saul and the rest of the armies of Israel? What was the reason for the difference?

3. Why did David put off the king's armor and go to meet the giant with a sling and five stones?

4. Goliath came against David with his sword and shield and armor. We do not wear physical armor, but we do have a spiritual sword and shield with which to fight the enemy. What does the Bible tell us these weapons are? See Ephesians 6:16,17.

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## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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5. On a previous occasion when King Saul was fearful, Jonathan and his armorbearer offer another example of courage in fighting the enemy against great odds. Where David had to face the enemy single-handedly, Jonathan and his armorbearer had the advantage of fighting together. Name some of the advantages we have as Christians in working together. See Deuteronomy 32:30 and Matthew 18:19,20.

6. Peter was very outspoken in his desire to fight for the Lord, and even used his sword to defend Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. What happened to Peter's courage by the time the young woman accused him? Why? See Luke 22:54-62.

7. An experienced warrior named Paul wrote a letter of instruction to a young man named Timothy. Read 1 Timothy 6:11,12, and enumerate several suggestions Paul made that would increase Timothy's courage in the fight against evil.

8. Our courage is often attacked by the devil through doubts and fears. We are admonished many times in the Bible not to be afraid. What do the following Scriptures say about why we do not have to be fearful?

Joshua 1:9

Proverbs 3:24,26

Isaiah 12:2

Hebrews 13:5,6

9. Share with the class an incident in your life when God gave you courage. It may have come through His Word, a song, or encouragement from someone else, enabling you to face a situation which otherwise might have caused anxiety.

10. Many Biblical accounts give examples of people who exhibited courage when facing an enemy. Most battles in our day, however, do not entail facing actual warfare. Name some trials of a mental, spiritual, or physical nature that will require courage to overcome.

5. Allow time for students to share their thoughts of the advantages of Christians working together. Bring out in discussion how the faith of an individual can be encouraged and strengthened by uniting in spirit with a like-minded person. Point out that Christ sent out His disciples by twos (Luke 10:1).

6. Peter's courage fled. Allow time for your students to discuss why they feel this happened. Guide them to conclude that seemingly, Peter's courage and strength were centered in himself rather than in the Lord, and when the test came, he failed. Contrast this with the change of attitude in Peter after he repented of his failure. Bring out how, at first, he had feared before a young maid, but after receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost he immediately had the courage to preach to thousands.

7. The suggestions were to flee the things of the world, follow after righteousness, fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. Discuss with your students what fighting the good fight of faith is and how we lay hold on eternal life. Following the positive directions of the Bible and being aggressive in our Christian service gives us greater courage to fight this fight as a good soldier.

8. Joshua 1:9 — For the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest  
Proverbs 3:24,26 — For the LORD shall be thy confidence  
Isaiah 12:2 — For the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength  
Hebrews 13:5,6 — He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee  
Discuss these Scriptures and then follow up by using the Scripture in Romans 8:31: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

9. Encourage each student to participate. Sharing these experiences will bring a blessing.

10. Some of these may be sickness, accusations of the devil either through the mind or through some person, going through sorrow or bereavement, false friends, unemployment, and uncertain times. Any of these things may defeat us if we do not ask the Lord for strength and courage to overcome. Read Ephesians 6:12 to the class to show the kind of opposition we might face in the times in which we live. Wrap up your lesson by emphasizing once more that God can give courage to face any of these.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Define courage. How did David demonstrate courage?

Why was David's courage so important, and what would have happened if his courage had failed?

Is it important for us to have courage? Why?

What kind of battles or "Goliaths" do we face today? Name some of these difficult situations (i.e., persecutions from people around us, trials that test our faith), and give some specific examples.

What happens when fear takes over? What does it feel like to be fearful?

How can you have courage to stand up for what is right?

In our ANSWER story, Paul referred to the "giant" he was facing. Compare his situation to the story told in our Bible text.

## THINGS TO DO

Make a poster-sized acrostic puzzle (similar to the ANSWER activity). Using each letter, have your students think of words which signify courage. Example:

C ourageous  
her O ism  
pl U ck  
b R avery  
v A lor  
darin G  
fearl E ssness

Display in large block type on poster-size paper. Have students draw pictures of things portraying courage. These could be drawn on transparencies for overhead projector, and shown to the class.

Ask students to tell of some happening or circumstance in the life of someone, perhaps in our own congregation, that reveals courage in his character. Or tell of someone you know who is facing or has faced great adversity and ask the students to tell how or why this would take courage.

Bring a thin piece of string that can be easily broken, and a medium length of rope. Use these to demonstrate courage and strength. Bring out that when you have an important, heavy job to do such as tying up big boxes for


moving, climbing mountains, or even playing tug-of-war, you must use the rope—a piece of string would not do because it is too weak. The rope, then, represents courage and strength that the Lord gives to those who trust in Him. Pass the rope and the string for the students to pull on.

Divide class into groups of two to four students each. Let them decide among themselves situations in the life of Christians today which require courage. Act these out in a skit. They can draw from their own experiences or a hypothetical situation. For example: It takes courage to be the only one at a lunch table to bow your head and give thanks, to tell school friends why you go to church "all the time," or why you don't participate in some of the activities of the other students. It always takes courage to take a definite stand for Christ and to let your light shine.

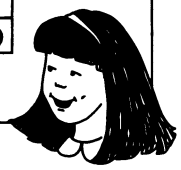
## Answers for ANSWER

### Have No Fear

God wants His people to be courageous. He will be their strength in difficult times. Fill in the acrostic puzzle with words from this lesson on courage. The answers can be found in the Bible text, 1 Samuel 17:19-51.



			C	H	A	M	P	I	O	N
		G	O	L	I	A	T	H		
	S	A	U	L						
	I	S	R	A	E	L				
			D	A	V	I	D			
			C	A	R	R	I	A	G	E
P	H	I	L	I	S	T	I	N	E	S



C — "There came up the \_\_\_\_\_, the Philistine of Gath." (v. 23)  
O — What was the name of the Philistine of Gath? (v. 23)  
U — Who sent for David? (v. 31)  
R — Who was fighting against the Philistines? (v. 21)  
A — Who said, "Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine"? (v. 32)  
G — What did David leave before he ran to meet his brothers? (v. 22)  
E — Who fled when their champion died? (v. 51)