

Courage

TEXT: 1 Samuel 17:19-51

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 14:1-16

KEY VERSE: 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

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.

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.