

of his people, whom Goliath had defied when defying his army (Ps. 124: 8; 125: 1, 2; 2 Cor. 10: 14; Heb. 11: 33, 34). The title "Lord of hosts" first appears simultaneously with the foundation of the monarchy (1 Sam. 1: 3). It is used by David, in Ps. 24: 10, as the loftiest title of Jehovah. We should then take "hosts" in its widest sense, including both earthly and heavenly hosts, and see in the title a proclamation of the universal sovereignty of Jehovah heeded within the nation, lest that invisible sovereignty should be forgotten in the visible majesty of the king, and outside the nation, lest Jehovah should be supposed to be merely a national deity." (Kirkpatrick).

48. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand—This was no brag-gart boast, but an expression of faith in God's help. (2 Sam. 22: 33, 35; Ps. 124: 8; 125: 1; 2 Cor. 3: 5; Heb. 11: 33, 34). There is a God in Israel—a God worthy of the name and able to defend his people (Josh. 4: 24; 1 Kings 8: 43; 18: 36; 2 Kings 19: 19; Isa. 52: 10). The other nations will learn that God does not suffer himself to be mocked in his people, but as their covenant God helpfully and mightily espouses their cause. (Erdmann).

47. And all this assembly—This may mean the whole body of Israelites and Philistines. The Lord saveth not with sword and spear—Providence is not "always on the side of the strongest battalions," as Madame de Sévigné wrote. When some one wrote in a German album during the Seven Years' War: "If God be for us, who can be against us"? it was Voltaire who wrote underneath "The big Prussian battalions." Brute force cannot prevail when God interposes for

the help of his people (ch. 14: 6; Ps. 44: 6, 7; Hos. 1: 7; Zech. 4: 6; 1 Cor. 1: 27, 28; 2 Chr. 20: 15). For the battle is the Lord's, and he will give it into our hands—By the will of Almighty God the issue of battle is determined and David's faith assured him that the victory would be his. The man who is God's champion need have no fear.

III. THE CONFLICT. 48. The Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David—The description is very pictorial, it is minute and vivid. Apparently he was seated, as was the rule with armies in ancient times when not engaged in conflict (verse 52). When, then, he saw David emerge from the ravine, he rose, and carrying the vast load of armor, moved slowly towards his enemy, trying to frighten him by his curses. (Payne Smith). The words suggest the pomp and pride and self-assumption with which he slowly proceeded to the fray. (Terry). David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine—David, in his light equipment, could move swiftly towards the battle array of the enemy, in front of which Goliath moved. His design was to attack him before he expected, at as short a range as possible, and to add impetus to his sling by running.

49. Smote the Philistine in his forehead—Visors, or protection for the face, were not yet invented, and the giant's shield was in the hands of his armor-bearer. David had four more stones, but the first was sufficient.

51. And slew him—With the giant's own sword was he beheaded. (ch. 21: 9; 2 Sam. 23: 21; Ps. 7: 15, 16; Heb. 11: 34). Champion—Their mighty man—not the same word as in verses 4 and 23.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. *Boastful words are foolish.* Goliath doubtless thought that he was entitled to a good opinion of himself. He had fought many battles and proved victor. Strength, skill in the use of weapons, all physical advantages were on his side. His antagonist did not present a very formidable appearance. He promised to be not a "foeman worthy of his steel," but a rash boy needing wholesome chastisement for his audacity. Yet his words were empty boasting. Nothing can justify anyone in bragging of what he has done, much less about what he is going to do. Modesty and real worth should go together.

2. *If you do but one thing learn to do it well.* David was a man of many accomplishments; you may be more limited in the range of your talents. But whatever you can do be sure you do it as perfectly as possible. If David had not perfected his skill in the use of the sling he could not have slain Goliath. There is no talent or accomplishment which may not some day stand its possessor in good stead. A half knowledge of anything may be

no better than entire ignorance of it when an occasion of importance arises. Be master of something.

3. *The mightiest giant can be overcome by faith, courage and the use of the means God has given us.* The Israelites were dismayed at the challenge of Goliath. Yet there were doubtless many amongst them who were as skilful marksmen as David. We have no reason to throw up our hands in despair because there are "giants great and tall, stalking through the land." We do not need "Saul's armor," some new and hitherto unused methods, or the weapons of carnal policy, but prayerful, wise and faithful use of the means and opportunities which lie to hand. Victory over these does not depend upon wealth, or learning, or power, or resources, but faith in God and courage to go forward.

4. *The battle against evil is the Lord's; let us be found always on the right side.* Goliath looked upon the stripling David with supreme contempt. So the agencies which God is employing to-day seem ridiculously in-