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DAVID AND GOLIATH

WHEN David was about twenty years old the Lord sent Samuel to anoint him as the successor of Saul in the kingdom of Israel. He was a shepherd boy, not known beyond his father's family at Bethlehem. Samuel himself did not know him, but when the sons of Jesse were brought before him, the Lord told him that this one, the youngest, was his chosen. Then Samuel poured oil on his head, and the Lord poured out his Spirit upon his heart. From that time David grew in favour with God and with the people.

David honoured God. It pained him to see the Lord's name dishonoured, either by the people or by their king. On one occasion, when he had been sent to Saul's camp with some special provisions for three of his elder brothers, he saw a giant called Goliath come forth before the army of Israel and defy any man in it to fight him. He inquired what it meant and learned that he had been doing this forty years and no man of

Saul's army would accept the challenge, although Saul had promised to reward with the hand of his daughter the one who should kill him. David was indignant that



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the name of the God of Israel should be thus dishonoured, and despite the protesting of his brothers he presented himself before the king and declared his willing-

ness to fight the giant in the name of the Lord, testifying to the power God had given him over the wild beasts in defence of his father's sheep. The king granted him the privilege of accepting the challenge.

“Am I a dog?” David answered, “Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the

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David was a man of faith. He trusted in the Lord as a child trusts in his parents. When he was about to go forth in single combat with Goliath, Saul clothed him with armour, like a warrior; but David was not used to such implements of warfare and they were a hindrance rather than a protection. He preferred to go in the simple garb of a shepherd, with only his sling-stones for weapons. Being in the habit of carrying his staff, he took even it along, that he might feel free and natural. But more than all else, he went trusting in the Lord, just as he did when at home guarding the sheep. Goliath felt insulted that a youth of twenty-three should come out to fight him, an old and experienced warrior, clothed with a heavy coat of mail; and he asked proudly,

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