

would not choose, if he could, to be like him?

Yet the story is not a mere tale of youthful bravery, nor even of trust in God. It goes deeper, and shows us the lines upon which such trust is based, and such bravery is built. The key to the right consideration of it is given us in the Golden Text: "The battle is the Lord's."

"The battle is the Lord's." There are many bold, spirited natures who love daring for daring's sake, danger for danger's sake. If the nature of David were akin to these, certainly his motive was not. He went forth to the contest with the giant because it was the Lord's battle. How many of those who admire his courage have ever thought of this? Let the teacher endeavour to bring out and to impress on his scholars these four points:

1. *The light in which David viewed the quarrel.* The light in which any event is looked at is important. It may be correct or incorrect, but any way it influences the conduct. I was in Germany at the time (1860) when the Emperor Napoleon commenced hostile operations against Austria for the deliverance of Lombardy, and well remember the intense excitement that prevailed. It was thought that the war, though commenced in Italy, was likely to extend to Germany, Napoleon's real aim being, as was supposed, not Italy, but the right bank of the Rhine. In fact, the whole matter was viewed as a menace to Germany, calling for preparation and watchfulness on her part. And so my sympathies, which naturally would have gone with the liberation of Italy, were enlisted for a time on the opposite side.

How was the challenge of Goliath viewed by the men of Israel? As a terrible menace to their land, their homes, their liberty, and their lives. But David saw deeper into its real meaning. He saw that in defying the "armies of Israel" the Philistine had defied the "armies of the living God." For it was perfectly well known that Israel was the people of Jehovah, and under his protection. And therefore David could not look upon the matter as affecting his nation only, but as affecting the honour of his God. He saw in it an impious defiance of the Lord himself, and therefore one which the Lord himself must take up. "The battle is the Lord's."

2. *The spirit in which David considered the quarrel.* I may be quite correct in my view of a matter. I may understand its causes and foresee its probable issues. Yet it may influence me but slightly, or not at all. A by-stander watching a game of chess

may perceive the intention of one of the players in certain moves, and foresee the probable result, but it may be to him a matter of entire indifference whether that player or his antagonist wins the game. And it is possible to see that certain things are adverse to the cause of Christ, without any deep feeling being stirred about the matter. Not so with David. That "the battle was the Lord's" was enough for him. Nothing could touch him more closely, nothing could rouse him more strongly, than a matter affecting the Lord's cause or the Lord's honour. If we take David's reply to his brother Eliab, as rendered by the Authorized Version, the words seem to show how thoroughly and deeply he was moved. "Is there not a cause?" As if he would say: Should I not care about this matter? Should I not make myself thoroughly acquainted with it? Should I not find out if any one is going to take it up? And why? Because he loved the Lord; because the Lord was his God, his strength, his Redeemer, his refuge, his habitation, etc. *Psa. 18. 1, etc.; 10. 14; 91. 9.*

3. *The confidence in which David went forth to the encounter.* The challenge of Goliath inspired the men of Israel with terror; they "fled from his face and were sore afraid." Notwithstanding the high honours offered to a successful champion, no man dared come forward. Each man felt, and rightly, that he was no match for the giant. Wherein did David's estimate of the task differ from theirs? In this, that he knew "the battle was the Lord's," and he should not be left to fight alone. Alone he might well have trembled; but the Lord being with him he had nothing to fear. He could boldly announce beforehand his victory, because the cause was the Lord's.

4. *The power by which David won the contest.* It is a marvellous picture—the shepherd youth, "fair" and "ruddy" going forth to meet the man of war from his youth, with his giant frame, his strong armour, and his mighty weapons. Who nerved that young hand as it placed the smooth stone in the sling? Who kept that sight undazzled, and that arm sure and steady, as the aim was taken? Were there no others in Israel who could use the sling and the stone? See *Judges 20. 16; 1 Chron. 12. 2.* The hand of the most practiced must fail, if his heart fail. But "the battle was the Lord's" and he who went forth in the Lord's strength came off conqueror.

Which of our young people would faint emulate David's example?

Let them understand that there is a battle going on in the world between good and