

Facing the Enemy

1 Sm 17:1-54

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. Troubles abound in this life.
 - 1. Diseases can zap our bodies.
 - 2. Loved ones disappoint.
 - 3. Sin constantly begs for our attention.
- B. We must deal with these struggles—Ignoring them doesn't make them go away.
- C. The Jews faced trouble with Goliath.
 - 1. This giant threatened to destroy their army.
 - 2. We can see how to handle struggles by studying this story.

II. WE CAN FACE THE ENEMY WITH FEAR, vv. 1-11.

- A. The Philistines and the Israelites were at war.
 - 1. “There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul” (1 Sam. 14:52).
 - 2. The Philistines have been known as a war-loving people.
- B. Goliath came forth and challenged the Israelites, vv. 4-10.
 - 1. Goliath, the champion, came forth.
 - a. In this age, single-combat was common.
 - 1) Two individuals would represent their armies and fight.
 - 2) The entire war would be determined by that one fight.
 - b. Goliath was a champion in that he had proved himself in single-combat.
 - 2. Goliath's appearance was impressive.
 - a. He stood almost ten feet tall.
 - b. His armor weighed about 150 lbs.
 - c. His spear's head weighed about 19 lbs.
 - 3. Goliath came forth and defied God's army.
 - a. He wanted to know why Israel had even shown up for battle since he was so powerful.
 - b. He wanted the Israelites to send him a soldier.
 - 1) These two would fight.
 - 2) If Goliath won, the Israelites would serve the Philistines; if the Israelite won, the Philistines would serve the Israelites.
 - c. He defied, cursed the Israelites.
- C. Saul and those with him were terrified.
 - 1. They knew with Goliath's great size, they could not win.
 - 2. The Israelites really had given up hope—they were saying, "We just can't win against him."
- D. We can be afraid of our enemies.
 - 1. The Israelites were afraid of the Canaanites (Num. 13:3-14:1).
 - 2. Illustration about childhood fear, *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching*, 148.
 - 3. Our fear will accomplish nothing.

III. WE CAN FACE THE ENEMY WITH CONFIDENCE, vv. 24-40.

- A. Goliath came and defied Israel 40 days, v. 16.
 - 1. During this time, Jesse sent David with provisions for David's three brothers who were fighting alongside Saul.
 - 2. When David arrived on the scene, Goliath came forward and defied Israel.
- B. The Israelites continued to be greatly afraid of Goliath/ vv. 24-25.
 - 1. Although the Israelites had gone forth in battle, they fled from Goliath's presence.
 - 2. The rumors in the camp was that great things would happen to the man who killed Goliath.
- C. David wants to know what right Goliath has defying God, vv. 26-27.
 - 1. David inquires concerning what will be done for the man who kills Goliath.
 - 2. David sees Goliath as evil.

- a. This giant is a reproach to Israel.
 - b. He defies the armies of the living God.
 - 1) Since Goliath defies God's armies, he really defies God.
 - 2) There is here a contrast between the living God of the Israelites and the dead gods of the pagans.
- D. David is brought before Saul, vv. 31-40.
- 1. David told Saul not to worry that he would go fight Goliath, yet Saul knows that David cannot defeat Goliath.
 - 2. David can defeat Goliath because of God's help.
 - a. As a shepherd, David had killed both lions and bears.
 - b. Goliath shall become like one of them since he has defied God's armies.
 - c. The LORD shall deliver David from the Philistine's hands.
 - 3. Saul sends David forth into battle.
 - a. Saul gives David his blessing.
 - b. Saul also fits David with his armor, yet because David isn't used to it David refuses to wear it.
 - 4. David took his staff, five smooth stones, and his sling and went to meet the giant.
 - a. In the ANE, slings were often used in war.
 - b. Although David couldn't use more sophisticated weapons, he could use what he had.
- E. Like David, we can place our confidence in God.
- 1. "Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, Which cannot be moved, but abides forever" (Ps. 125:1).
 - 2. "We may boldly say, 'The LORD is my helper, I will not fear. What can man do to me?'" (Heb. 13:6).
 - 3. Illustration about God's shaking the world, *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations*, #1258.

IV. WE CAN FACE THE ENEMY WITH VICTORY, vv. 41-54.

- A. David and Goliath exchanged taunts.
- 1. The Philistine disdained David.
 - a. The Philistine saw that David was a youth--this made him angry, for he wanted to fight.
 - b. Since David did not come with sword or javelin, the giant ask, "Am I a dog that you come after me with sticks?"
 - c. Goliath cursed David with in the name of his gods.
 - d. Goliath promises to feed him to the birds and the beasts.
 - 1) Such was common for victors in the ANE.
 - 2) This shows that Goliath is assuming victory.
 - 2. David taunted Goliath.
 - a. Although the Philistine had great military might, David came before him in the name of the LORD.
 - b. The LORD would strike down the Philistine, his head would be cut off, the Israel would gain victory over the Philistines.
 - c. Everyone who heard this tale would know that God gives victory.
 - d. The LORD does not save using conventional military weapons.
 - e. The LORD will give victory.
- B. When the Philistine came forward, David struck him down with his sling.
- C. The Israelites conquered the Philistines.
- 1. David cut off Goliath's head causing the Philistines to run.
 - 2. The Israelites pursued the Philistines and conquered them.
 - 3. David took Goliath's head to Jerusalem.
 - a. Jerusalem was occupied by the Philistines at this time.
 - b. Many speculate that David may have thrown the head over the wall as a warning.
- D. We are more than conquers through Christ (Rom. 8:35-39).