

# Jesus Blesses the Little Children

**Text: Mark 10: 13-16 ♦ Theme: Jesus includes children in His Saving Work.**

## Background Setting

Jesus is traveling toward Jerusalem. He leaves Galilee and His home in Capernaum, never to return there again, and continues His work for a time in Perea. Perea is the country east of the Jordan River and opposite Samaria and Judea. Thus traveling southward by easy stages through this region, the Savior preaches the Gospel also there. But Jesus' thoughts are centered more and more on Jerusalem. His earthly life is almost at an end. In a few weeks He will be sacrificed and die on the cross for all mankind. The incident with the children may very well have occurred somewhere outside of Jericho.

**Introduction:** What is the most important thing for you to learn while living on this earth? (possible answers: how to read, use computers, how to earn a good living, or get a good job, the laws, how to enjoy life, get along with others, etc.) Lead the class to answer that the way to eternal salvation is the most important thing they can ever learn. They will have to know many things in life—even as children—but how to be saved is #1. In order to be saved we must become part of Jesus' kingdom. Today we will learn something very important about children, God's kingdom, and salvation.

## Notes on the Text

**vs. 13**—*they brought*—they were probably mothers and fathers who believed in Jesus or at least had heard of Him. Literally “kept bringing” suggests not a one-time action, but something that was ongoing. Note the special effort made to bring the children to Jesus.

*young children*—Matthew and Mark use the Greek word *paidia* (young child, infant); Luke used *ta brephe* (baby, suckling). The same word is used in 1 Peter 2:2 (newborn babe) and even as a designation for an unborn child in Luke 1:44. Suffice it to say some of the children were probably young enough not to realize what Jesus was doing for them.

*that He might touch them*—Matthew adds: “and pray.”

*disciples rebuked*—this means they were scolded and warned.

Moms and dads wanted Jesus as the Savior of their children. The laying on of hands was an old custom in Israel. Since the days of the Patriarchs it had been customary for parents to bless their children (Isaac blessed Jacob; Jacob blessed his sons). Someone has suggested that in the days of Jesus, fathers brought their children to the town elders or the Rabbi for their blessing. The touching combined with prayer, implies heavenly, spiritual blessing upon the children.

For whatever reasons, the disciples were trying to prevent or slow this train of parents and children. They may have thought Jesus was too tired from His preaching and healing. His time was too valuable to be spent on mere infants or pestered by their parents. They themselves might have desired Jesus' time and attention—from this reaction we see that the disciples did not yet realize the relationship of the children to the Kingdom of God.

**vs. 14**—*Jesus...was greatly displeased*—the disciples were wrong, very wrong. Jesus was indignant (aroused to anger). He became angry because the little children needed Him just like everyone else. His displeasure shows what He thinks of “little ones.”

*let, allow, permit*—The implication is that children, and this includes babies, can come, are ready to come and should come to Jesus. They need only that men permit them to do so. Like adults, the purpose of their coming is to receive from Jesus salvation. For they too are sinners, even as babies.

*Psalms 53:5*—*There they are in great fear where no fear was, For God has scattered the bones of him who encamps against you; You have put them to shame, Because God has despised them.*

As the disciples were forceful in their rebuke, Jesus is now forceful in making His point of how special the children are to Him.

*Do not forbid them*—A word of warning to the

disciples! And a word of warning to all like-minded modern disciples—moms and dads—who do not think it necessary or important to care for the spiritual welfare of their children. Jesus Christ is not just for adults. The lesson teaches that He has a special love for children also.

*For of such is the kingdom of God*—Jesus does not declare that children are by nature in the kingdom of God. Children too are part of the “all” that have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23) and who are by nature children of wrath. Children may be cute and cuddly, but they are not by nature “innocent and pure and sinless.” Every baby that dies contradicts and proves this to be otherwise.

*John 3:6—That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

If it were any other way, there would have been no need for children to come to Jesus.

But the kingdom of God (God’s rule in the hearts of believers) was intended for children also. In fact, they are model examples of those who are in His kingdom. If you want to know more about the characteristics of believers, then examine the children. For they openly display those characteristics that every “belonger” to the Kingdom of God must have.

**vs. 15**—Receiving the Kingdom of God means simply to believe in Jesus who has founded this Kingdom through His suffering and death on the cross. But no one will receive it unless he/she receives it as a little child. Astonishing! Children do not receive it as adults, but adults receive it as little children. The child is the model, not the grownup.

The characteristics that children exhibit in receiving the Kingdom of God are unashamed excitement, unassuming humility, unquestioning trust. In children, the powers of reason and human logic do not stand as stumbling blocks to faith as so often happens later in life. In order to become a citizen in the Kingdom of God, everyone must possess a humble and trusting child-like mind.

Little Steve first went to Sunday school at age 4. After his first Sunday, he came home full of excitement and joy. Clutching his colored (scribbled) picture of Jesus to his breast, he spent most of the afternoon singing “Jesus loves me.” Days later he was still affirming, “Mom, Dad, do you know that Jesus loves me and that I’m going to live in heaven?” That is child-like receptivity, excitement and trust all

directed to Christ. Without such a faith, it is impossible to be saved.

**vs. 16**—It was not enough for Jesus just to touch (place hands on) these children. He also took them into His arms as His own children and then blessed them. What Jesus actually said we are not told. Perhaps He said, “I love you. I came to save you. I will pray for you, fight for you, and die for you. I will give you a crown in heaven.” We may assume they were Jewish children who were in the Old Testament covenant, yet they needed the blessing of the Savior who came to establish the new covenant of grace. Jesus therefore conferred a spiritual blessing for the growing spiritual life in these children. It was not just empty words. Children can and do belong in God’s Kingdom. They can believe and have faith. God blesses them with spiritual blessings.

**Related story**—*Matthew 18:1-5*—Jesus’ disciples once asked Him “Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?” It was sinful pride which caused them to ask such a question. They had an idea that Jesus’ Kingdom would be a kingdom on earth with armies, power, land, honor, and much wealth. The disciples all wanted to have special and important positions in this earthly kingdom which they thought Jesus was going to establish. They didn’t understand that Jesus’ Kingdom was not of this world, but in the hearts of believers.

Jesus at that time set a little child among them and told them that unless they would change and become like a little child, they would not enter His Kingdom. The change He was referring to was a change of heart, a turning to faith in the Lord Jesus.

When it comes to matters of faith, we cannot follow our own minds or our sinful reason. We simply have to accept what God says in His word. We have to believe like little children, simply trusting in God without trying to figure it all out, humbling ourselves, believing even if we can’t always understand. How God could have made everything out of nothing in six days and man out of dirt is hard to comprehend. How He died and arose again has to be believed by faith. That is how we become great and special in God’s Kingdom. Not by commanding armies, or having great wealth or honor, but by humbling ourselves and trusting as a child.

### **Application**

- 1 Whom does God love? The whole world (John 3:16)! God does not wish that any in the whole world perish because of their

sins. Yet, because of their sins, that is what would have happened to all if God had not sent His only Son, Jesus, to live and die for the world.

- 2 In the world in which we live the worth of children is being undervalued, even maliciously (the advocating of abortion). Children are individuals in the world. Therefore, God loves them also. Children need the Savior because they too are sinners. They are not just sweet, innocent, sinless creatures.  
*John 3:6 — That which is born of the flesh is flesh. Gen. 8:21 — The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.*
- 3 Children need the Savior. The Kingdom of God is for them also. God blesses the little ones through Jesus.
- 4 Many children are brought to Jesus for the first time when, as little babies, they are baptized. In baptism, Jesus blesses little children through the Holy Spirit. They might not understand what is going on, but the Holy Spirit changes them. He makes them children of God, believers in Christ and members of God's Kingdom. Jesus now rule in their hearts where sin and the devil ruled before. Before conversion, children were enemies of God. Now they are His friends. Through baptism children receive the blessings of faith: forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. From the lesson we know that Jesus wants little children brought to Him for such blessings.
- 5 Baptism is not the end of faith, only the beginning. To remain in and keep the faith in which we were baptized we have to keep coming to Jesus by continuing to hear the Word of God (Sunday school, confirmation, church, read the Bible, etc.). For the Word of God does something for our faith we cannot do. It strengthens our faith. Through it God gives us wisdom and knowledge. It gives us protection from our spiritual enemies. It is the only way through which people get, have and keep their faith in God.

*Rom. 10:17 — Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*

- 6 In order to belong to God's kingdom, believers listen to God's Word. Children (and others) are "touched" by Jesus as the Holy Spirit works through the Means of Grace—the Gospel in the Word and Sacraments.

- 7 Parents should not hinder their children from coming to Jesus but instead it is their God-given responsibility to bring them to Jesus and His Word (Deut. 6:4-8, Ps. 78:1-7, Eph. 6:4). Some parents do not believe that their children are sinners, therefore they don't need a Savior when they are little. Some do not believe that their children can believe in Jesus until they get older. Our lesson teaches us that children believe and that they can receive the blessings of God. They also belong to God's Kingdom of Grace. Jesus got very upset when His disciples wanted to keep children away from Him and His blessings. Jesus is very displeased when parents keep their children from Him. Without Jesus there are no spiritual blessings for anyone. In Matthew 18, Jesus had a special warning for anyone who would destroy or weaken the faith of a child. For such a person, it would be better if a big rock were tied around his neck and he be drowned.
- 8 But no matter how much our faith grows and develops, there is one way it should remain the same. How? It has to remain like the faith of a child. It has to simply trust that what God says is true—without doubts, questioning, wavering. It has to remain humble, never searching for greatness or special importance. That is the kind of faith Jesus looks for and expects. With such a faith, we then have the blessings of eternal life in the Kingdom of heaven. With such a faith we are saved.

### **Other Resources**

**Passages:** Mark 16:16; John 8:47; Romans 10:17; Mark 10:14

**Hymns:** 627, 629, 630, 631, 302

**Catechism:** Baptism

# Jairus' Daughter Raised From the Dead

**Text: Luke 8:40-42; 49-56 • Theme: Jesus Gives Life to His Father's Children.**

*Parallel:* Matt. 9:18-19; 23-26; Mark 5:21-24; 35-43

## Background Setting

It is always necessary to compare the various parallel accounts in the gospels to be certain of getting the full story in all its details, and sometimes to avoid coming to false conclusions concerning certain details. This is true on both counts in the case of this narrative. Matthew, though the briefest, adds some poignancy to the request of Jairus, "lay your hand upon her and she will live." Mark adds several details, including the very words of Jesus to the girl. Surely the most crucial detail that the *combined* reading makes clear is that the girl was not yet dead when Jairus left home. Matthew's abbreviated account could be misunderstood on that important point if read alone.

A question also persists concerning the historical setting of this miracle. Matthew records the events in a different sequence than Mark and Luke. He records this miracle immediately following his call to discipleship while Mark and Luke report Matthew's call somewhat earlier and place this directly following the healing of the demoniacs in the region of the Gergasenes. Furthermore, various attempts at harmonizing the gospels have led to differing views whether the raising of the youth of Nain and the healing of the centurion's servant came before or after this miracle. These questions interest us, because we would like to know, if possible, the order of the miracles of raising the dead (Nain, Jairus, Lazarus), as well as the connection between the two outstanding miracles involving the synagogue at Capernaum (Centurion's servant and Jairus' daughter). If we could determine that the centurion first approached Jesus, this would affect how we view Jairus. As a leader of the synagogue the centurion helped to build, Jairus was surely aware of that healing. He may even have been a member of the delegation that made the appeal to Jesus on his behalf. But these questions do

not have determinable answers. What happens is that one evangelist, under inspiration, follows a chronological order, and the other a topical order and we are not always able to determine which order is being used and followed. The suggestion that Matthew would most likely present the events surrounding his own call in strict order holds some weight. Likewise there is an attractive topical connection in Luke: The Gergasenes begged Jesus to leave, the crowds welcomed Jesus back, and Jairus begged Him to come.

## Notes on the Text

**vs. 40**—*When Jesus returned*—from the land of the Gergasenes on the east shore of the sea of Galilee to Capernaum on the west shore. *His own city* (Matt. 9:1) refers to Capernaum which Jesus had made His center of activity. *The multitude welcomed him* need not imply a welcoming at the very instant of arrival, but could allow some time for the activities mentioned in Matt. 9.

**vs. 41**—*A man named Jairus*—Matthew does not name the man. Jairus means "He (God) will enlighten." The name is found occasionally in the Old Testament in a slightly different form. See Num. 32:41; Judges 10:3; Esther 2:5.

*A ruler of the synagogue*—Ylvisaker (*The Gospels*, p. 203) and Ruprecht (*Bible History Reference* pp. 143-4) give accounts of the duties of such a ruler. We quote Ruprecht at length:

*Each synagogue had a number of elders, presided over by a chief ruler, who had the superintendence of the divine service and determined who were to be called up to read from 'the Law' (Books of Moses) and from the prophets (always more than one), who was to conduct the prayers, and who, if any, was to deliver an address. The supreme care of the service, including good order, and of the building devolved upon him.*

*The rulers of local churches had charge of the synagogue worship, appointed readers*

and speakers for the services, and had authority to excommunicate members of the synagogue. They were 'learned in the Law,' the Word of God, and were called rabbis. The people met for public worship in the synagogue on the second, fifth, and seventh (Sabbath) days of the week. The sexes sat apart. Just as in the Temple, there was a court for the men (Court of Israel) and another one for the women. The synagogue was always placed so that, on entering it, the faces of the worshippers were turned toward Jerusalem. Beyond the middle of the synagogue rose the platform. On it stood the pulpit, or rather lectern, before which the reader stood, while the speaker, or preacher, sat. Some synagogues had more than one ruler, e.g., this very one at Capernaum (Mark 5:22--'one of the rulers of the synagogue.')

Ruprecht then continues with a detailed description of the synagogue service. The Greek form indicates that Jairus held this position over the course of some length of time. From this description of his duties it is natural to suppose that he was rather well acquainted with Jesus, perhaps even in the course of his duties giving the conduct of the service into the hands of Jesus.

*Come into his house*—This contrasts with the centurion of Capernaum who in His exemplary humility and heroic faith found it neither proper nor necessary for Jesus to enter his home. The faith of Jairus does not reach such heights, but that doesn't indicate a grossly weak and wavering faith. His request with the confident addition "*and she shall live*" demonstrates a firm faith (Matt. 9:18). This does not mean that it was not under stress at this crisis. It was; and Jesus acts to strengthen it.

*fell down at his feet*—touching his forehead to the ground. This is not merely Oriental extravagance but a heartfelt act of reverence and worship imploring help.

**vs. 42—only daughter**—The Greek word *monogenes* is used, which means only-begotten. This same word is used of Isaac (the **only** son of promise), the youth of Nain, the demonized child whose father met Jesus at the foot of the Mount of Transfiguration—and of Jesus. It doesn't simply mean only daughter, but only child.

*about twelve years old*—Mark 5:23 uses the phrase "my little daughter." While we consider this part of childhood, the Jews considered a girl of 12 years and one day to be of age, and a boy of 13 years and one day to be of age.

she was dying—Some consider it a sign of the weakness of his faith that he waited so long before asking for help, and see this as a desperation move by a doubting father. This is not fair to Jairus. We do not know how fast the disease progressed. While there was a reasonable chance that she would improve through natural means, it was unnecessary to seek Jesus. Besides, Jesus was not in the region. He was among the Gergasenes. We can see this as an exercise of his faith that now, when the need was most acute and plainly beyond the help of man, that he comes to Jesus, expecting to receive effective aid. To ask easy things of God shows little faith; to ask the impossible without wavering shows great faith.

Although Matthew reports, "My daughter has just died," there is no contradiction in the accounts. Trench (*Miracles*, p. 148) has some fine comments here:

*Yet these differences are not hard to adjust; he left her at the last gasp, he knew not whether to regard her as alive or dead; he knew that life was ebbing so fast when he quitted her side, that she could scarcely be living now; and yet, having no certain notices of her death, he was perplexed whether to speak of her as departed or not, and thus at one moment expressed himself in one language, at the next in another. It is singular enough that a circumstance of this kind, so taken from life, so testifying of the reality of the things recorded, should have been advanced by some as a contradiction between one Gospel and another.*

**vs. 43-48**—This interruption is reported in all three of the gospels. It must have had a double effect on Jairus.

- It would be a comfort to see that his trust was not misplaced, Jesus was willing and able to help people in the most extreme needs.
- What pain any hindrance to a speedy cure for his daughter must have been! The delay did not need to be long to be a trial to his faith. It was long enough for the worst to take place. In the providence of God, this delay served the same purpose as the delay in coming to Lazarus. It served to further the glory of God and to strengthen the faith of Jairus.

**vs. 49—Someone came**—Note the switch to the present tense. This adds vividness to the account and helps us to feel the momentous events more personally—as though they were

just now happening before our eyes.

*Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher*—The words are addressed to Jairus and overheard by Jesus. The message was presented as a final hopeless word. Nothing more can be done. We don't know what Jairus thought, but it is possible that he shared the view that Jesus could heal the sick, but not raise the dead and that the matter was now beyond His reach. Mark 5:35 tells us that more than one person made up this delegation.

*Trouble*—This is a strong word originally meaning “to flay” or “to skin” and then softening the sense to “fatigue, trouble, harass, bother.” The sense of the grammatical form is that Jairus is now doing this and should cease.

*Fear not, only believe*—The faith of Jairus was under attack and in danger of weakening. The despair of those around him and the natural hopelessness of the situation threatened to overwhelm him. It would not be a loss of saving faith to believe that death is final in this life—we all accept that as a common fact, but a weakened confidence in Jesus would be a severe loss. He had had confidence that Jesus could aid a deathly ill girl; he is now invited to believe that He can still help, even in the face of death itself. This required great faith especially if this was the first of the miracles of raising the dead. The miracle had been anticipated in the ministry of Elisha (2 Kings 4:32ff). Jesus promises that He was able to make her whole even now. Notice what astounding claims Jesus calmly made of Himself here and throughout His ministry. His witness of Himself was plain and uncompromising. From Mark 5:37, we see that all but the inner circle of disciples were dismissed at this time and did not travel with Christ to the house.

**vs. 52**—The mourners were on the scene in full force. Christ deals with them in a somewhat impatient and rebuking manner. He is not rebuking all mourning of the dead. He Himself mourned for Lazarus. But the mourning here displayed did not reflect hope of the resurrection and was rowdy and tumultuous. It was not even entirely sincere, with professional mourners on hand, complete with flutes (Matt. 9:23), who felt no personal loss, and whose mourning easily turned to derisive mocking. The mourners were gathered so quickly since the burial usually took place the same day of the death, or if the death took place late in the day, the next morning. Lenski describes the raucous scene (*Commentary on Luke*, p. 492):

*The place was filled with a din of noise. People were sobbing with unrestrained noise and beating their breasts in excessive demonstration of grief—all in the approved Jewish fashion, the greater the loss, the noisier the wailing. Matthew mentions the hired flute players, and the professional wailing women were no doubt there in numbers. Because of the prominence of the family and the loss of an only child the professionals staged their best performance. With hair streaming wildly, beating their breasts violently, the women uttered loud heart-rending wails and bursts of sobs. The standing of the family demanded a goodly number of these women. Rising above their noise came the piercing wails of the flutes. Many condoling friends were already there. The house was full of this commotion. The custom of this artificial type of mourning extends far back, past even the times of Jeremiah (9:17), and is found among Jews and among pagans alike.*

*She is not dead, but sleeping*—Lazarus, too, was said to be asleep. This fairly common expression for death was used already in the Old Testament (Duet. 31:16—of Moses; Job 7:21; 14:12f; Jer. 51:39; Dan 12:2). We are told that even the rabbis sometimes referred to death in this way. But when used of the dying and recently dead in the way that Christ now speaks, it easily caused confusion among people (see the disciples in the case of Lazarus). This expression “of sleeping” gives witness to the fact that death is not permanent, but is broken by the resurrection. Not merely a euphemism to soften a harsh reality, it is a glorious truth. Death truly is like a sleep and ends with a “waking.” Here the people misunderstood Jesus as referring to a coma. This is not surprising since Christ said, “she is not dead,” or even more strikingly, “she has not died.” He could not be asserting a coma condition since He had not yet inspected the girl. He is not denying her physical death, as the rationalists claim. But what do they gain by this? It takes miraculous power to instantaneously and completely overcome a coma. No, Christ is denying her death only in view of the coming miracle. He is asserting His power over death. (See John 11:25-26 and John 5)

**vs. 53**—*And they laughed him to scorn*—This phrase is repeated exactly in the three accounts. There is no mirth in this laughter, only ridicule, scorn, bitterness, and unbelief. The form indicates a continuing or repeated action. *They knew she was dead.* Indeed they did. Their

strong reaction is therefore a testimony to the truth of the miracle. She was dead! There was no doubt in their minds about that.

**vs. 54**—The miracle is reported in simple terms. A mere word and divine effects. The power was in the *Word*, the expressed will of God. It was not in the touch, for Lazarus and the youth of Nain were raised by the word alone. The miracle was both instantaneous and complete. The first shows that Christ was in complete control. He did not need to struggle to overcome death, but in an instant and with ease, He commands death to leave and it leaves. The second proves that Jesus is not limited in His mercy. He does not give partial gifts. He is willing to give all that is good for us in abundance. The girl arose strong, she walked about. She was able to eat. She arose, not just alive, but completely healthy.

**vs. 55**—*Then her spirit returned*—This fully proves that she had indeed been dead. It also teaches what death is—the spirit (soul) separated from the body. They were reunited and life was restored. This return to life is not identical to the resurrection that waits for us. This young woman re-entered this life and was restored to the same form of existence that had been cut short by her illness. She was again subject to the various ills of this vale of tears. She later died again. She had the same limited powers that all humans have. The resurrection to come will change all that. We will be glorified and sinless, not subject to the sorrows of this world.

*He commanded that something be given her to eat.*—Christ's concern extends to the details, and was more discerning than the parent's. The need of food could easily go unnoticed by the parents in their excitement. The compassion of Christ extends to every circumstance. Even when He Himself was in great need, being tired, hungry, or in agony, He still was aware of the needs of others, and filled with compassion for them.

**vs. 56**—*tell no man*—The miracle naturally could not be hidden. There were too many who had seen the sick girl die. Matthew reports that the "report of this went out into all that land." Why Jesus forbade the news to be spread is not explained. A similar command was often given to others. Surely one reason was that Christ did not wish to be known as a mere miracle-man, but above all wished to be known for His message of the saving Gospel which He proclaimed.

### Application

- 1 Death is the result of sin, the "wages of sin."  
This is always the case, even in the case of

believing Christians. This girl died because she too was corrupted by sin.

- 2 Death may come at any time. This girl was quite young, and yet she died. Death comes to the very young or to the very old or at any time in between. It may also come with prior warning (as here), or very suddenly. Even as children, we must be aware of and prepared for death.
- 3 God has control of death because He is true God and thus the source of all life. God is the Living God, the opposite of death, the LORD and Giver of life.

*John 1:4 — In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.*

- 4 Christ has control of death because He has overcome sin. He is "the Holy One and the Just" (Acts 3:14) He is "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) He can give us life because He has borne our sins.
- 5 Our Savior's resurrection assures us of our own resurrection. Jesus' resurrection conquered death for all who trust in Him. What a beautiful comfort to know that we (young or old) need to fear death "as little as our bed," (hymn 558:3). What a tremendous comfort to know we will close our eyes in peaceful sleep only to hear Jesus' wonderful words— "Little girl, young man, arise!"
- 6 We see the power of Jesus' Word. It is the Word that brought us to faith in Baptism; it is the Word that forgives our sins in the Lord's Supper; it is the Word that strengthens and keeps us in the faith until death; it is the Word that keeps this world under God's protective care; and it will be Jesus' Word that will bring all things to an end. It is His Word which will call us out of our grave unto life eternal.
- 7 The Word overcomes Satan and condemns sin (hymn 262:3). The Word cuts to the heart causing godly sorrow and repentance (Heb. 4:12). The Word helps us overcome temptations and sinful thoughts and desires (Matt. 4:1-11). The Word gives us wisdom, strength and guidance in this dark world (Ps. 119:105).

### Other Resources

**Passages:** John 11:25-26; John 14:19; John 1:4

**Hymns:** 2262:3; 558:3; 587; 593; 595; 603

**Catechism:** Third Article and Meaning

# The Slave Girl of Naaman

**Text: II Kings 5:1-14 • Theme: The Father's Children Talk About Jesus to Others.**

## Background Setting

Our text takes place during the life of Elisha. The Kingdom of David and Solomon had been divided into two kingdoms: Israel, the northern kingdom and Judah, the southern kingdom. It is now about 100 years after this division, about 850 B.C. Joram (also called Jehoram) is the unbelieving king of Israel.

King David had defeated the Syrians in a series of three battles. Syria submitted to Jewish rule at that time. This continued under Solomon. However, Solomon lost the section of Syria known as the Syria of Damascus, an independent nation was set up by King Rezin. Later, after the ten tribes of Israel separated from Rehoboam and during the reign of King Asa of Judah, Rehadad (King of Syria) formed an alliance with King Asa and subdued the northern tribes. He also laid siege to Samaria, but was defeated by King Ahab. However, his army with Naaman as commander later defeated King Ahab (this is the battle in which Ahab died in his chariot). It was during the rule of Benhadad of Syria that Naaman, as commander-in-chief of the army, contracted the disease of leprosy.

## Notes on the Text

**vs. 1**—The Syria referred to in this section of Scripture is the Syria of Damascus. This is the rich country around Damascus (from the north-south mountain range in present day Lebanon to the desert of Syria to the east).

Biblical leprosy was a whiteness. Lepers could still function and earn a livelihood as did Naaman as commander of the army. Leprosy begins as a white spot spreading or disappearing sometimes with a reddish hue or as raw spots. It greatly disfigures its victims by eating away portions of the nose, cheek, or lip and leaving an unsightly scab. The Law of Moses compelled lepers to live in colonies apart from the rest of society; but the Syrians did not demand such a separation.

**vs. 2**—Troops of Syrians had entered Israel to raid and plunder. This time they took Captives.

Among them was a young girl who was taken to Naaman's house and assigned to work as a house-slave for his wife.

**vs. 3**—She had been taken from her parents and was roughly and cruelly treated by her captors. But through obedience, loyalty, and kindness, she won the favor of her mistress (cf. Joseph in Potiphar's house). Both were content with their life and situation because they knew God was in total control and would always do what was best for them in relationship to the furthering of His Kingdom. Therefore they did not spend their time in depression or despair, but used their time and situation for God's glory.

The young girl's actions and the times she spoke to her mistress about her God had an effect on this woman. From the young girl she heard of the true God, His prophet Elisha and the miracles performed by him in God's name. The girl was confident that Naaman could be cured of his leprosy by God through Elisha. Her faith and her love of God would not allow her to keep silent when she clearly saw the solution to Naaman's problem.

**vs. 4**—Naaman, having heard from his wife of the advice of the young girl and being desperate to rid himself of the leprosy, told Benhadad about the possibility of asking Elisha in Samaria to help him overcome this disease. Permission was necessary due to Naaman's position and the relationship between the two countries.

**Vs. 5**—Benhadad wished for Naaman's recovery and eagerly agreed to write a letter of introduction and appeal to the King of Israel who was Joram (Jehoram) at this time. Naaman took gifts:

- 10 talents of silver = \$ 20,000
- 6000 pieces of gold = \$40,000
- 10 changes of raiment = costly robes for festive occasions.

These would be given to Joram in return for his favor to Naaman.

**vs. 6**—Joram was to some degree dependent on Benhadad since the defeat of Ahab, therefore he might have felt compelled to grant a request



from the Syrian king. Joram, however, did not trust Benhadad. The letter was written in such a way as to put the responsibility for the healing on Joram because Benhadad probably thought Elisha would respond to any summons from Joram.

**vs. 7**—Joram was always fearful and distrustful of Benhadad. This letter seemed clearly to him to be Benhadad's crafty plan to begin a quarrel and ultimately a declaration of war, since Joram could not heal anyone of leprosy. (He did not consider the only option he had— to turn to God! Joram did not believe in God. Contrast this with the faith of the young girl.) Joram tore his clothes as an expression of anger and fear, a useless gesture.

**vs. 8**—Imagine the commotion caused by the arrival of Naaman, his entourage and the subsequent outrage and fear of Joram. News traveled fast in Israel and it was not long before Elisha had heard of the situation. Elisha sent a message of rebuke to Joram who should have directed Naaman to Elisha.

**vs. 9**—Naaman and his whole entourage arrived at Elisha's house and waited for him to come out and humbly ask Naaman's pleasure. This showed great pride on the part of the commander.

**vs. 10**—Elisha was unimpressed! He sent a messenger, Gehazi. Elisha's command to wash in the Jordan River seven times was not meant to demean Naaman, but to show him that Elisha was not going to perform "magic." (Note: Seven is significant in that the priest sprinkled the one being "purified" from leprosy seven times with a blood-water mixture in the temple—seven also denotes completeness or wholeness).

The LORD God would heal Naaman, and Elisha wanted to make that point very clear by commanding Naaman to do something seemingly preposterous and beneath his dignity.

**vs. 11**— Naaman was looking for special incantations, magical actions or some good work on his part as necessary to heal him of this disease. He became angry that things were not working out as he had planned: some chants, some magic, some hand waving and presto...the leprosy is gone! Then he could give his gifts and depart. This was not in the LORD's plan. The LORD was going to make good use of the witness of the young girl that had caused Naaman to come to Israel. The LORD, through Elisha's words, meant to show Naaman that his healing was not a payment to Naaman for gifts received. Nor was it a reward for some great work done or

was it from Elisha, but alone by God's almighty power.

**vs. 12**—Naaman was angry that he had come all this way to bathe in a river (and a muddy one at that) when he could have bathed in the clean mountain rivers of Damascus, the Albana and Pharpar. It was not the cleanliness of the river that made the miracle, but the power of God that cleansed. Note: This miracle is a type of Baptism—not the water that washes away sin but the Word of God that washes away the leprosy of sin.

**vs. 13**—The servants, addressing Naaman respectfully (my father), urged him to do this simple task. What could it hurt? Naaman probably would have done a difficult task thinking the harder the task; the more likely the cure.

**vs. 14**—When he went down to the Jordan valley and did as Elisha had commanded by bathing seven times in the river, he was cleansed! God had done as Elisha had promised. God had done as the young girl knew He would. Faith is not complex, it simply believes. Faith does not have to understand, it simply trusts. God did not have to use a complex method for cure nor did God need Naaman to understand. God had shown Naaman that by FAITH he was healed!

**vs. 15**— God's Word does not return to Him empty, but accomplishes that for which He sent it. Naaman was not only cleansed of His leprosy but he had been converted to faith in the One True God who alone could cleanse him of his sins. Naaman desires to give the gifts to Elisha, now not as a payment for services rendered, but as a gift of thankfulness to the LORD—a fruit of his faith.

The young girl witnessing in Damascus had far reaching effects. It not only led Naaman to Elisha and led to his physical healing, but more importantly to a spiritual healing. Also consider the effect of this event on the servants, on Naaman's wife, and others with whom Naaman would come into contact. No doubt in the days to come there was a gaining of new souls for God's kingdom. New believers from Israel and Syria caused the angels to rejoice, as they surely also rejoiced over those believers whose faith was strengthened by this event. All this because of the faith and courage of one young girl! God surely knows how we can serve Him best and He will give us the faith and courage to serve Him well to the glory of His kingdom.

## Application

- 1 Children can be missionaries for God by the manner in which they live their lives. Their words and actions can testify to the peace and comfort the Gospel gives them. At home, in the neighborhood, in school, at work and at play, their lives can be beacons leading others to Christ. There was probably no educated man in all the land that could convince Naaman to do what he did—only that little girl. She simply trusted and then put that simple trust into words to help a fellow human being find salvation. What great work was done through that little girl's testimony! How many others were exposed to the God of Israel after Naaman's conversion? We can only guess. It is not necessary to know. As with the girl, we just share—sow the seed—and the rest is left to the LORD.
- 2 Children can be missionaries for God because God gives them the faith and courage necessary to witness about Him and His marvelous plan of salvation. This faith and courage comes by hearing and studying God's Word. Whether it is in church, at home, in Sunday School or Day School. Through His Word, the Holy Spirit is preparing children for the special service of being a witness for Christ. ("...Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.") Through the instruction the children receive in the Word (from their pastor, teachers, and parents), a firm foundation is being laid for a life of witnessing.
- 3 The little girl did not say, "What can I do? I am so little and insignificant." So also that little boy with two fish and five loaves of bread did not keep what he had to himself but gave all that he had for the common good. As with the fish and bread it is what the LORD does with our little offerings that gives them worth and importance. That means that little children are just as important to the Savior as older people. The little slave girl proved to us that children too can spread the news about our God. They can be missionaries! In fact, Jesus said that "anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."
- 4 This story of the little girl who served Naaman's wife as a slave is a very good example of making the best out of our situation here on earth. She was a *little girl*—a maiden who was torn from her family

when Naaman's army raided her village. Instead of cursing or despising her God for "doing this to her", or "for letting such a thing happen", she continued to serve her new masters as God's representatives. Not only is the little slave girl loyal and respectful to her new master(s), but she even does more than she has to for them. Naaman would never have known about Elisha (probably) had she just remained quiet. What she told him (through his wife) was "above and beyond the call of duty"; a good insight into the character of this girl. Eph. 6:5ff outlines the attitude of the child of God:

*Servants, be obedient to those who are your earthly masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ: not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service, as to the LORD, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the LORD, whether he is a slave or free. (Cf. also Col. 3:22 ff., Heb. 13:17)*

- 5 This truth applies also to the parents of the children. God does not command obedience only to kind and considerate parents or to parents only when we think that they are right. As with masters, God tells us to obey—period (Eph. 6:1). The only time we can not obey is when it contradicts the Word or Command of God (Acts 5:29 ff.).
- 6 In this same way Joseph was obedient when he was, at a fairly young age, separated from his family and sold into slavery. He too worked "as to the LORD," looking always for the good that would come of his earthly misfortune. Joseph ended up saving the entire region, as well as his own family, from starvation. God richly rewarded him for his faith and endurance while on this earth (Romans 8:28 ff.).

## Other Resources

**Passages:** Matt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 3:15; 1 Tim. 2:4; Luke 19:10

**Hymns:** 496, 507, 509

# The Boy King Josiah

**Text: II Kings 22:1-11; 23:1-7,10,21-25 • Theme: The Father's Children Serve Jesus in their Daily Lives.**

## Background Setting

Josiah means 'Jehovah heals'. The seventeenth king after David, he ruled over the Southern Kingdom (Judah) for 31 years. His reign began in 638 B.C. when he was eight years old. By this time, the Northern Kingdom is gone, taken into captivity by the Assyrians over 100 years earlier. The Biblical prophets Zephaniah and Habakkuk are contemporaries of Josiah's rule.

Of Josiah, the Bible testifies that "he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left" (he lived a life of obedience to God and His Word). The fact that it took seventeen generations for a successor to appear on David's throne who earned the complimentary name "son" suggests just how rare and sincere a king Josiah was, and how impressive the moral and spiritual accomplishments of his reign. He was truly Josiah, "the reformer."

2 Chronicles 34 tells us that in the eighth year of Josiah's reign (age sixteen), "he began to seek the God of His father David." Judah, by this time, was full of idolatry. Some of the previous kings of Judah permitted and even led the way in this down-fall. By far the worst influence on the Southern Kingdom was Josiah's own grandfather, Manasseh. His father Amon was little better. It may be that Josiah's mother may have provided the spiritual influence that set the stage for his later reforming works.

Manasseh begins his rule as a one-year-old boy. He did more evil in the LORD'S sight than even the heathen nations that inhabited Canaan. He rebuilt the idols his father had destroyed, he worshipped Baal and Astaroth, he worshipped the stars, he sacrificed his own son in the fire and practiced witchcraft and sorcery. Manasseh also shed much innocent blood so that we are told Jerusalem was filled from one end to the other.

Amon was Manasseh's wicked son who lasted only two years and was assassinated.

Josiah was Amon's young son. Only eight years

old when he took the throne, he followed the LORD. When he was 20 he had all of the idols and high places destroyed. He killed the heathen priests and started a complete reformation of the whole land. In his eighteenth year of reign he began to repair the temple. It was during this time that the long-lost book of the Law was found. When Josiah read it he was astounded and led a reformation of heart and worship. The words of the Book revealed the destruction of Judah because of their idolatrous ways. Josiah at least would have peace in his lifetime.

**Introduction:** What would you do if everyone had to do what you say? Would you think of all the things you want people to do for you? Would you use your authority to serve God? Most of the kings before Josiah including his father and grandfather did not serve God. They were wicked men who served their own wants and lusts. But Josiah knew and loved the true God and used his power and authority to serve God and the people.

## Notes on the Text

**vs. 3-11**— Josiah is now 26 years old.

*Book of the Law*—the Book of the Law was discovered in the Temple largely because of Josiah's support of a restoration of the decaying building. In this way Josiah set an example for Christians in taking a personal interest in the care and functioning of our churches and congregational business.

*tore his clothes*—This is a sign of sorrow and repentance. Josiah was astonished at what the Law of God said. His great grief was because he realized how far God's people had departed from the LORD'S way in their worship and their lives.

**vs. 23:1-7**—Josiah calls a large meeting of the people and reads to them from the Book of the Law. He renews and rededicates the people to the Covenant of the LORD. In the following verses you can read of the utter desolation Josiah made of the altars throughout the land of both Judah and Israel, even digging up the

bones of the heathen priests and burning them on the altars of the false gods. He destroyed Jeroboam's altar in Bethel as well.

This purging of the land actually occurred before the repair of the temple. The destruction of these idols "began in the twelfth year" of Josiah's reign (when Josiah was only 20).

- 4: destroyed vessels dedicated to Baal.
- 5: destroyed those who followed nature worship.
- 7: destroyed those who lived in sexual perversion.
- 24: destroyed those who practiced witchcraft, sorcery and the occult.

**vs. 10**—*he defiled Topeth*—perhaps the very place where Josiah's grandfather Manasseh sacrificed one of his sons.

**vs. 21-25**—*Keep the passover to the LORD your God.* The Passover that was celebrated at this time was according to the words of the Book of the Law. We are told that no Passover like that had been celebrated in Israel since the days of Samuel and the Judges. The king and the people more closely observed all the provisions the LORD had laid down in the Law regarding the annual celebration of the Passover. For reference to the celebration read 2 Chron. 35:1-18. What high words of praise the LORD has for this faithful king:

*2 Kings 23:25 — Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him.*

### Application

- 1 Josiah served God as a king. We can serve God in whatever position we have, as a child with responsibilities at home, at school, with friends, etc. How do you serve God in these positions? Most of the examples that Josiah had to follow were bad. His grandfather and father were wicked. But he did not follow their example, he did what he knew God wanted. So with us too, it's not OK to do things wrong just because we see others doing them. If we see bad examples from friends or even parents we should not follow them but do what God says.
- 2 Children very often don't think that they can really change anything, but Josiah made some great changes. He used his influence for good. We do not have the power and authority that Josiah had or have influence

over as many people as Josiah, but children do have a great influence over the people they live with—parents, family, friends, etc. They can influence people by serving God faithfully. Often, children from unchurched families come to VBS and end up bringing the whole family to church to take instruction and become members. Children can be great mission tools.

- 3 It is only in the Bible, the Book of God's Word, that we can learn about Him. Josiah, even though he worshipped the LORD, did not know what the LORD wanted of him and mankind or what he had done for mankind till he found the Book of the Law. How important and priceless the Bible is! How easily lost it becomes after one generation of disuse. Even as the children of Israel, we can lose both the Bible and our faith if we fail to hear and use God's Word. Many churches still have the Bible but have lost the message because they no longer listen to the words.
- 4 Josiah saw to the reinstatement of the Passover festival, which had fallen into disregard as the foreign religions became more popular. Consider the world's effect on Christian festivals, such as Christmas, Easter and Reformation, and how they lose their meaning to us.
- 5 Josiah also took care of the priests and encouraged them in their work (2 Chron. 35:2 ff.). This presents a good opportunity to encourage a life of service to the LORD in the teaching or preaching ministry. Teach the youngsters to respect their ministers and teachers. Remind them to pray for our pastors, teachers, and missionaries. Talk about the goal of the church, the importance of its work.
- 6 Upon hearing the commands of God's law, and the threat of His punishment, 2 Kings 22:19 records that Josiah "humbled himself before the LORD."  
*1 John 1:8-9 — If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Ps. 51:17 also applies.*
- 7 Josiah turned to His LORD (his Savior God) with all his heart, soul and might. He rid his people of false gods and false teachers. In the same way, God does wish us to be witnesses to truth and righteousness (Eph. 2:10; 1 Peter 2:9; Mt. 5:16). We ourselves

are to avoid evil, and have nothing to do with false teachers who might lead our faith away from God's Word (Ps. 1; 2 Cor. 6:14-15).

- 8 The most important things about Josiah were not all the great accomplishments and deeds, but his life of humble repentance, fear, love, and trust in God, and willingness to listen to God's Word. Josiah's love for God was seen in his hearing God's Word and believing His promises. So also we as children who believe in Jesus will want to hear His Word in church, read it at home, and trust what God promises to us in Christ.

### **Other Resources**

**Passages:** Matt. 5:16; 1 Jn. 1:8-9; Ps. 51:17;  
Matt. 22:37; Esther 4:13

**Hymns:** 261, 264, 266, 283-286, 296, 317-331

**Catechism:** Lord's Prayer (First Petition);  
Confession

# David and Goliath

**Text:** I Sam. 17:3-11; 32-33; 37-51 • **Theme:** Jesus Protects His Children From All Evil.

## Background Setting

The confrontation between David and Goliath came at a time when the Philistines and the Israelites were at war. The Philistine nation, a federation of five city-states, lay to the west of Israel along the Mediterranean. The LORD permitted the Philistines to afflict and chastise His people at various times over a period of many years during the reign of the Judges and later King Saul.

David was the son of Jesse; he was the youngest of eight sons. David was a shepherd and an ancestor of our Savior. At the time of our story, he had just been secretly anointed by Samuel the prophet as the next king of Israel. Saul had been rejected by the LORD as king because of his disobedience and unbelief. Saul did not know that David had been anointed. He had chosen David as his armor-bearer. He loved David also because of his abilities in playing the harp—it soothed his troubled spirit. Scripture says of young David:

*Now David was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking...Then one of the servants answered and said, 'Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the LORD is with him.'* (I Sam. 16:12a,18)

## Notes on the Text

**vs. 3**—The Philistine army camped on one side of the valley. The army of Israel, led by Saul, camped on the other. The Philistines were challenging God's people. Earlier, a Philistine garrison had been defeated in battle by Jonathan (Saul's son) and his men. The Philistines wanted revenge. The scene of the confrontation was the valley of Elah, about 10 miles southwest of Jerusalem (cf. vs. 1-2).

**vs. 4**—The name Goliath means 'exile'. This man was a giant among men. His height was "six cubits and a span." The cubit, or distance from the elbow to the extremity of the middle finger, is estimated at from 18-21 inches. The span, or

the distance between the extremities of the thumb and the little finger in the outstretched hand, is reckoned as half a cubit. Goliath's height was therefore somewhere between 9 ft. 9 in. and 11 ft. 4 in. He was the champion with which the Philistines challenged Israel. He was of Gath—a descendant of the giants who lived until the time of Joshua (Josh. 11:21-22)

**vs. 5**—His helmet was made of some metal like bronze or copper. His armor was a network of iron rings or rows of bronze plates like scales overlapping one another. It covered his chest and back. It was unusually heavy, weighing at least 150 lbs. (5000 shekels of bronze)

**vs. 6**—greaves are splints or strips of metal which covered the legs to protect them. A javelin is a lance which was carried across the shoulders.

**vs. 7**—His spear was 4-5 inches in diameter-thickness (a weaver's beam). Its head alone weighed nearly 20 lbs. (600 shekels)

**vs. 8-10**—Goliath dared anyone in Israel to come out, fight, and kill him. He was so sure he could defeat any opponent. He trusted in himself and his great size and strength. In ancient times battles between opposing armies were sometimes averted when each side agreed to choose one man to represent it. The side of the champion who won would be victorious over the other who lost. Goliath's tauntings included specific reference to Saul. No doubt the Philistines recognized that Saul was a weak leader, a fact which gave them boldness to seek a confrontation.

**vs. 11**—Saul had lost faith in the LORD. He could see only the superior size and strength of Goliath, and could not imagine how any of the men of Israel could defeat him. The soldiers took their cue from the king, and all cowered in fear.

**vs. 32-33**—David had been sent by his father to find out how David's three elder brothers were doing, and to take them some food (v. 12-18). When he arrived at the camp, he heard the blasphemous taunts of Goliath, and was astonished that no one took up the challenge.

David was also told that Saul had promised great rewards to anyone who killed Goliath (v. 22-27). Goliath came out twice a day for 40 days and dared someone from the Israeli army to fight him. When David heard of the giant's boast and mockery, he volunteered to engage the giant in battle. King Saul did not think that David, his armor-bearer, was any match for the giant. David was young; he was not trained for one-on-one combat. He was strong, but inexperienced in warfare. The giant was older, bigger, stronger, and well-seasoned in fighting.

**vs. 37**—David's barehanded victory over a lion and a bear earlier was the LORD'S sign that He was with him. This had occurred when David rescued his sheep from imminent danger and death. He trusted in the LORD and His help. He had a child-like faith. He confided in the LORD. He was confident that the LORD could and would help him again in this situation. Saul gave his consent for David to fight the giant as representative of all Israel.

**vs. 38-39**—Saul suited David in his own armor, but it did not fit well. David was not used to wearing armor or maneuvering in it.

**vs. 40**—David went forth armed with what he was used to using as a shepherd—a shepherd's staff and his sling. "The sling was an early weapon of war, by which stones were thrown with great force and surprising accuracy of aim. The slingers ranked next to the archers in efficiency."

**vs. 42**—Goliath showed contempt for David as he came toward him. Goliath was insulted that a young boy like David was sent out by Israel to fight.

**vs. 43**—The Philistine even cursed David by his false gods. He trusted only in himself...his strength, his armor, and his skills in battle. He defied the God of Israel.

**vs. 45-47**—David, however, trusted in the LORD God of Israel, the LORD of hosts, the living God (vs. 26) who commands armies of angels in contrast to the powerless, lifeless idols of the Philistines.

*Ps. 115:3-4 — He walked by faith and not by sight.*

David was not looking for personal glory, but the glory of God. The battle is the LORD'S.

**vs. 48**—David didn't wait for Goliath to come to him, but boldly advanced to meet him unlike the Israelites who had fled from Goliath when he had come out to taunt them (v. 4).

**vs. 50**—David had five smooth stones in his shepherd's bag. The first hit Goliath in the

forehead and felled him. David didn't even have a sword.

**vs. 51**—David used the giant's sword or dagger to cut off his head. When the Philistines realized what had happened and saw that their champion was dead, they fled. They were not so willing to serve Israel. They now were afraid and Israel pursued them. Many were slain.

## Application

- 1 This story is one of the most familiar in the Old Testament. It is also one of the most interesting to our children. Goliath was a tower of strength physically, but he was nothing spiritually. David was no match physically for the giant, but he was a giant spiritually. David triumphed over Goliath, not because of his strength or skill with a sling, nor because he was lucky. He triumphed because the LORD was with him. The LORD guided that first stone to its mark. The LORD helped David because David trusted in Him. The same is true of us. The LORD often gives us tasks to do that seem almost impossible. Sometimes they may well be, if it weren't for God's help and strength. "Our help is in the name of the LORD who made heaven and earth." The challenges which we face today come in many different forms. Some are physical; some are financial; many are spiritual. We all must struggle against the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh. Come what may, whatever the challenge, with the LORD on our side and with faith in our hearts, the outcome is never in doubt. Just as the LORD gave Israel a great victory through David so our LORD today gives us the victory through Christ.
- 2 God often uses the small and the weak to defeat the great and mighty of this world. In this way he demonstrates clearly that victory comes through His might, not through the might of man (see 1 Cor. 1:28-29). His strength is made perfect in weakness. The LORD can use you to do His work. You don't have to be unusually strong or smart. It is His strength and wisdom that counts (Phil. 4:13).
- 3 David's example shows us that we should not look for personal glory, but rather be concerned that God be glorified in all that we do. Give God the credit for your talents and achievements. Remember, all that you have are gifts from Him.
- 4 As long as we remain God's children through faith in Christ we don't need to be afraid.

The Almighty God is able and willing to protect us. With one little stone He downs the giant Goliath—with one little word He can cause Satan's fall (Hymn 262:3). In contrast, the ungodly, those who, like Saul, have lost their faith know nothing but fear. Those who oppose God can't win no matter how big they are, no matter what kind of weapons they have. You can't ever win or do yourself any good by sinning against God no matter how attractive or profitable the sin may appear.

- 5 “David in his single combat with Goliath, was a type of Christ, who, single-handedly (Is. 63:3 says *alone*), as our Substitute, engaged the hellish Goliath in a deadly struggle and gained the victory for us.” (Rupprecht *Volume 1*, pg. 293) (See also Gen. 3:15; I Jn. 3:8, Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:15; I Pet. 3:18-19)

*David's battle with Goliath is a picture of the battle which is the lot of all Christians in overcoming the attacks of Satan and of the sneering unbelievers. Although the odds often seem decidedly unfavorable to the Christians, they always have the LORD of hosts on their side and therefore must finally obtain the victory. At the same time we are here reminded of the great Son of David (Jesus), who also, in a most singular manner, conquered the prince of this world and has given us the victory. (Kretzman, Popular Commentary Old Testament, vol. 1, pg. 485)*

### **Other Resources**

**Passages:** Eph. 6:10-18; Ps. 34:7-8; 37:5; 124:8; Jer. 17:5; Phil. 4:13; Romans 8:31-39; I Pet. 5:6-7; Prov. 3:5

**Hymns:** 262; 437

**Catechism:** First Commandment; Lord's Prayer (Third, Sixth, Seventh Petitions and the Doxology)