

The Triumphant Christ



David Wilkerson June 16, 2014

We are all familiar with the story of David and Goliath. It is a tale of God's chosen man facing down a giant enemy and defeating him. To me, it is one of Scripture's clearest illustrations of the *triumphant* Christ.

As the story begins, the Philistines have come against Israel. Every day Goliath, the Philistines' champion warrior, came forth to taunt the Israelite army. He was a huge man, armed from head to toe: "The weight of (his) coat was five thousand shekels of brass" (1 Samuel 17:5). Day after day the very sight of him was intimidating to Israel: "He stood and cried unto the armies of Israel...*give me a man*, that we may fight together" (17:8, 10, my italics).

Of course, Goliath is a type of the devil, and the Philistine army represents satanic forces, the powers of hell. Goliath spoke for Satan when he said to God's people, "You say God is your peace but you tremble in fear. You say he's triumphant but you're totally intimidated. Admit it, you are defenseless against me. I have all power over you."

How did Israel react to this giant? "When Saul and all Israel heard those words...they were dismayed, and greatly afraid...(they) fled from him...and said, Have you seen this man...?" (17:11, 24-25). God's people cried, "Do you see the size of the enemy we're up against?"

If God hadn't sent a deliverer to Israel, what would have happened? I believe the army would have spiraled into despair, losing heart and doubting God. One soldier after another would have deserted, abandoning the fight.

But God had a man of his own: David. When the young Israelite heard Goliath mocking Israel he was offended. He demanded, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (17:26). David encouraged Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him: thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine" (17:32). Consider his cry as he ran toward Goliath armed with only a humble slingshot: "The battle is the Lord's" (17:47).

The despairing Israelites saw David load his sling, wind up and fling a stone – striking Goliath between the eyes! The blow sent the giant crumpling to the ground. What went through the Israelites' minds at that moment? They must have wondered, "Is the giant still alive? Does he have some fight left?" This is the concept many Christians have of the devil. They're afraid Christ's work against our enemy is not completed. So they don't do anything they think might arouse him.

But David grabbed Goliath's sword, raised the blade and cut off the giant's head. That's when Israel realized, "It's over, we've won!" David didn't just leave Goliath stunned; he finished him off completely. The battle was over and everyone knew it. Suddenly the Philistines fled with the Israelites in hot pursuit. In short, Satan was defeated and his demons were put to flight. And in his glorious triumph, David made an open show of it for all the world to see: "David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem" (1 Samuel 17:54).

The same completed work of triumph took place at the cross.

Jesus didn't leave our enemy, Satan, stunned on the ground. He completed the job, defeating him and declaring from the cross, "It is finished." Simply put, "It's all done. I have defeated your enemy. You never have to fear his

condemning power again.”

In Jesus' day, Satan's intimidating voice had roared against a people burdened down by endless ordinances. Some 630 rules of flesh had been instituted by the religious leaders, laws that were meant to merit God's favor. Yet these rules were a burden too heavy for anyone to carry, and Satan took advantage.

Every Sabbath, the same discouraging message was heard in the synagogues: “If you break just one of these laws, you're guilty of breaking them all.” The people knew, “Our fathers weren't able to keep these rules, and neither are we.” God was misrepresented as a hard ruler, roaring from heaven, “Obey me or die.”

Yet the people's striving accomplished just one thing: It brought condemnation upon them. In spite of all their sacrifices, nothing could ease their consciences. And Satan poured futility on them, barraging them with a continual sense of hopelessness.

What came out of their despair? A plague of sin broke out. This always happens when people try to fulfill God's law by self-effort. They throw up their hands, thinking, “What's the use? No matter how hard I try I'll still fail.” Hypocrisy was rampant, as sinful men acted holy but remained filthy inside. Leaders manipulated laws to steal homes from widows. And a spirit of fear continually hovered over the entire society.

In utter misery God's people yearned for the Messiah. It was a cry for freedom from fear, from overpowering sin, from dread of God's wrath. And in this dark, despairing hour of Israel's history, God brought forth a man. That man, of course, was Jesus, son of David and the Son of God. And the taunting enemy he faced was Satan.

God laid all the sins of humankind – past, present and future – on Jesus. He also laid on him the judgment due for all those sins. Therefore, as Jesus shed his blood, gave his life and descended to the grave, all our sins were buried with him. Through Christ's sacrifice, God was saying, in effect, “Enough of striving. Enough of trying to please me with offerings, deeds and promises. That old mentality went into the grave with my Son. Only one triumphant man came out of the grave. Christ alone is in my favor, the one who is beyond judgment, who has eternal life, who has triumphed.”

David's victory was a statement – “It's over, we won!” – and so it is with our Savior's victory.

“Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it” (Colossians 2:15). Paul is saying here, “Everything that was against us has been taken out of the way. It was all nailed to the cross.”

As we see Jesus being nailed to that cross, he holds in his hand a long list of our debts of sin. He displays that list openly to the Father, the angels, all of humankind, and the devil and his demonic powers. As the nail goes into Jesus' hand, it also drives through that list of transgressions – and all of it is canceled. It is finished now; Christ is no longer fighting. He has won and is in glory, a completely triumphant man.

Because of his triumph, we must never again fear the devil. His accusations are all empty. Still, there are many Christians who know forgiveness and justification but do not enjoy the triumph of Christ. If you hear him accusing you, answer him with these words from heaven: “Who shall lay anything to the charge of the elect? Who is he that condemneth? If any man sin, we have an advocate.”

Sin will always be the giant facing us. Sometimes we fall, sometimes we're overwhelmed by fears, sometimes we're tormented by disturbing thoughts. Yet if we're still intimidated by these things then we're operating in the wrong body: the old man (flesh) and not the new man (Christ) who alone is recognized by the Father.

You see, there is much more available to us through the cross than eternal security and forgiveness. Christ's blood has *power to bring us peace*. Sadly, you may have lived in fear for so long you now wonder, “Will there ever be a time when I'm at peace? Will I ever have joy without being intimidated by the devil?”

Yes, it is absolutely possible. It will happen when you get your eyes off the roaring giant before you and see instead your triumphant Savior standing over his defeated carcass. Once the Israelites saw Goliath was dead, they also raced forth to put the Philistines to flight. They did so because they knew, “It's over, and we won!” “Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place” (2 Corinthians 2:14).

Though we know unbelief is the worst of sins, at times we may doubt God's concern for our future.

Right now you may worry, "I'm not triumphant over sin. I constantly fall into guilt and condemnation. My battle just never seems to end. In fact, I'm not sure the enemy is fully defeated in my life. If the enemy is dead, then who is tempting me?"

I urge you: Look not at the giant facing you but at your triumphant victor, Jesus. You are not under his judgment. On the contrary, he has promised you would *benefit from his triumph*. Nothing can separate you from his love except hardened unbelief.

Jude addresses his epistle to saints living in dark times when the world has gone mad. He says that in order to face such a battle – to see the triumphant Christ in the midst of darkness – we must do the following: "(Keep) yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).

Dear saint, do as Jude says. Keep yourself in the knowledge that God loves you. Remind yourself continually, "In my every struggle, my every failure, God loves me still." As you wake up each day, keep yourself in that love and look for his mercy. It is found in his victory, the triumph of Christ!

[Download PDF](#) [1]

Links

[1] <http://worldchallenge.org/printpdf/125/>