

# **“The Champion of Israel”**

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E. J. Waggoner

After shepherd boy David was anointed by the prophet Samuel to be king of Israel, he went back to the wilderness and cared for the few sheep that he had left there as faithfully and tenderly as before. He did not try to push himself into the place that God had chosen for him, but left it to Him to bring him to the throne in His own time and way.

Something soon took place which brought David especially to the notice of the king and all the people of Israel, and made them begin to see that God had chosen him to be their future ruler.

The children of Israel were at war with the Philistines, and they were terrified by a great giant who came day after day out of the Philistine camp, and mocked and defied them. Notice what was the proposal that he made to them: “Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me and kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him and kill him, then shall ye be our servants and serve us.”

All the Israelites were very much distressed by the sight of this great giant, and by the words that he spoke. His great size and loud voice frightened out of their minds the precious promises of God, that He was with them to save them, and that one of them should “chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.” They were sore afraid and fled, and the man for whom the giant called, to come and fight with him, could not be found.

Can you see in all this, dear children, a picture of our own sad, helpless condition without the one Man who alone can fight and conquer the great giant of evil who leads us all captive at his will, and goes about “as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour?” In his first fight with our father Adam Satan overcame and brought him into bondage, so that all his children became his slaves. Our only hope is in finding a man to conquer and slay the enemy, and deliver us from his taunts and cruel bondage.

Now watch carefully what followed in the case of the great giant Goliath, for God is here giving us a lesson of hope and comfort. In it we may read of the complete destruction of our old enemy Satan, and of the mighty deliverance that has been won for all his captives.

After many days there came a champion to the camp of Israel, sent by God to fight for His people. When he heard the proud words of the enemy of God’s people, and saw their terrifying effect upon them, young David longed to show them all “that there is a God in Israel.” Strong “in the name of the Lord of hosts” he went bravely forth to fight with Goliath.

David knew that God had given him the victory, and he ran to meet the giant, who fell down before him slain by a stone that David had taken from the brook. He wanted to show to both armies that the giant was really dead, so he cut off his great head and held it up for all to see.

What a change this made in the feelings of the two armies! The mocking Philistines fled in terror from the field of battle now they saw that their champion was dead, while the Israelites followed them with shouts of triumph.

Who is the Man that has been found to meet and conquer for us our old enemy Satan, and has made a show of him openly, triumphing over him? "The Man Christ Jesus." He died "that He might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

"By force of arms we nothing can,  
Full soon we us downridden;  
But for as fights the proper Man,  
Whom God Himself has bidden.

Ask ye who is this same?  
Christ Jesus is His name,  
The Lord Sabbaoth's Son;  
He, and no other one,  
Shall conquer in this battle." —(Martin Luther.)

Now if the children of Israel had not known that the giant was dead, they might still have trembled and feared and thought themselves the servants of the Philistines, and allowed them to keep them in bondage. But when they saw his head cut off and held on high, they knew that he was made an end of, and that their champion David had won their freedom. And not their freedom only, but David's victory had turned those who were before their masters into their slaves.

And so when Jesus won His complete victory over Satan, He made an open show of him, that all might be assured of their victory and freedom. He burst open the tomb, which is Satan's prison house; and when He Himself "came forth a majestic Conqueror," "many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and coming forth out of the tombs after His resurrection, they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many."

Will you, dear children, be the willing slaves of Satan, when you know that Jesus has won your freedom? Will you not rather, "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might," "resist the devil"? and the promise is that "he will flee from you." For Satan and his host know well, as did the Philistines, that their cause is lost and all their power taken away,—they know that the victory is already won for all who trust in the Man Christ Jesus.

Last week we saw David as the type of Christ the Good Shepherd. Here we see him again as the type of Christ, the great Champion of mankind, and our Deliverer from the cruel power of all our enemies.