

8. **v. 25 cast it at his feet.** There are several parallels between this whole incident and the Passover, of which this expression is one (my *Christadelphian* article of January 1999 has more details). The word translated 'cast' may also mean 'touched', and is the same word used to describe the *daubing* of the blood on the lintel and the doorposts in 12:22 at the Passover. 'Feet' may also be translated 'legs', so it is possible that, instead of thinking of the foreskin being cast at someone's feet, we are to think instead of the blood of the circumcision being daubed on the legs of the boy. In this case there would be a parallel between the blood of the Passover sacrifice, which averted the death of Israel's first-born, and the blood of the circumcision, which averts the death of Moses or his son. The blood functions as a protective sign against the destroyer. At the very least, the echo of Passover language would seem to be deliberate.
9. **v. 26 he let him go.** Life is spared, therefore, because of the quick response of Zipporah in verse 25. She takes on the role of a mediator in the passage, turning away the threat of death as blood is shed.
10. **v. 26 bloody husband.** Literally, 'bridegroom of blood'. The most straightforward reading would seem to be that Zipporah is angry that she has to go through this messy process of circumcision for the sake of religious convictions. It is interesting that in Arabic the stem used here for 'bridegroom' or 'husband' means 'to circumcise' as well as 'to protect'. 'Protect' is also the meaning of the root in Akkadian. Furthermore, the Hebrew stem behind the word Passover can also mean 'to protect'. The Jewish scholar Nahum Sarna thus suggests that the phrase "a bloody husband . . . because of the circumcision" in verse 25 could be translated/paraphrased to mean, "You are now circumcised [and so] protected for me by means of the blood—the blood of circumcision".
11. **v. 27 met.** This term is identical to the one used only three verses earlier to describe the angel's *meeting* Moses to kill him (4:24). The expression is not rare exactly, but it is not common either, and it seems intriguing that these two *meetings* are recounted in such close proximity and with the same vocabulary. What the connection might be eludes me, however.

## David and Goliath (2)

Geoff Henstock

**S**O DAVID SETS forth with no more accoutrements than he needs as a shepherd—just a staff, a sling, and five waterworn stones for the sling (1 Sam. 17:40). Goliath, accompanied by his shield-bearer, comes to meet him, reacting with disdain when he has a close look at his opponent (vv. 41,42). He regards him as a youth, using a Hebrew word that denotes inexperience. But "Pride goeth before destruction" (Prov. 16:18).

Goliath gives vent to his disdain in verses 43 and 44, lampooning his young opponent. It is ironic that he compares himself to a dog, for the Israelites would have so regarded him; but that was not the reason David came against him so lightly armed. Goliath focused on the staff, yet it was the sling that would bring him down. He invoked his gods in pouring scorn on David, but he was oblivious to the power of David's God to deliver. In every respect Goliath missed the point.

David corrects Goliath's misunderstanding. The armour of each of the protagonists is irrel-

evant. David declares that Goliath has defied the living God, Yahweh, "the God of the armies of Israel", and will be defeated (vv. 45,46). David freely ascribes his impending victory to God. The issue at stake in this contest is the vindication of God. Israel is in need of this lesson, as verse 47 indicates. David wants Israel to know that God can deliver in spite of the apparent weakness of the flesh. A similar lesson is expressed in the song of Hannah (2:1-10), in 1 Samuel 14:6, and in 2 Chronicles 20:14,15. It is a lesson that saints in all ages must learn and yet are so apt to forget.

### The combat

After David had clearly enunciated the facts of the case, and in the process no doubt enraged Goliath, the two advanced to meet in combat. Verse 48 is emphatic; David was not intimidated by his mighty opponent, he "hasted" to meet him. Before Goliath reached David, a stone was despatched and the giant fell to the ground

(v. 49). Although armed to the teeth with mighty weapons, protected with an enormous quantity of armour and accompanied by a shield-bearer, he was felled with one small stone. David cooperated with God to ensure that God would deliver him. Of ourselves we can do nothing, but if we have faith in God “[we] can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth [us]” (Phil. 4:13).

David decapitates Goliath in verse 51, providing stark confirmation of his utter defeat. The head of the Philistine becomes a grisly token of David’s victory. The Philistines were terrified by what they saw, and fled in disarray, with the Israelites in pursuit (vv. 52,53). Having witnessed David’s victory, the Israelite army understood the lesson: their God was mighty to deliver them. There was no need to place their confidence in the flesh or to cower before the supposed might of their enemies.

Verse 52 says they chased the Philistines “to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron”. In the place of “valley” the Septuagint gives “Gath”, suggesting they chased the Philistine army to Gath and Ekron. This seems more likely. To the very walls of their strongholds the Israelites chased the enemy, even to Gath, the city of Goliath, before returning to spoil their camp (v. 53). The nation, and Saul in particular, rejoiced at the deliverance wrought through David (1 Sam. 19:5).

#### The significance of the victory

In the meantime, David was gathering the trophies of his victory (v. 54). Why take the head of Goliath to Jerusalem? At this stage the city was still occupied by the Jebusites. A possible explanation is suggested by W. F. Birch:

“David . . . after killing Goliath, cut off his head (as he threatened), took it to Jerusalem (his destined capital), exhibited it perhaps to the Jebusites (they would know what he meant), and (to call type to my aid) mindful that in the Mount of the Lord, the Lord had delivered Isaac, carried out his purpose of erecting both a memorial to the Lord (who delivered him out of the hand of the Philistine), and also a trophy of his victory, on the site of Isaac’s altar. As at Ai and in the valley of Achor, a great heap of stones (like Galeed) was raised, with the crushed head (Gen. 3:15) of Goliath below it in a pit or hole”.<sup>1</sup>

The reference to Genesis 3:15 is a key to appreciating this record. David’s victory over Goliath is a type of the victory of Messiah over the

power of sin. The seed of the serpent received a fatal blow to the head, and this triumph is memorialised at the place where the ultimate victory of the seed of the woman would take place. It is possible that Golgotha, the place of the skull, derived its name from this prescient incident.

That verse 54 relates to such long-term aims is obvious from the reference to David placing the armour of Goliath in his tent. Although the text indicates that the tent belonged to David, we learn later that at least part of the armour of Goliath had been transferred to the tabernacle at Nob (21:9). So the skull went to Jerusalem and the armour to the tabernacle—symbols of the future conquest of sin power.

#### Saul’s reaction

Saul was particularly impressed by David’s success. He wanted him to join his army, and sent Abner to inquire after him (vv. 55,56). Abner brought David to Saul, and David told the king he was the son of Jesse (vv. 57,58). Some critics have been tempted to use this passage to cast doubt on the accuracy of the record. They point out that 1 Samuel 16 says that David had been recruited to work in Saul’s palace, yet now the king claims to be unaware of his identity.

In response there have been ingenious attempts to claim that 1 Samuel 16 and 17 might not be in chronological order. That might be true, but imagined reconstruction of the text is unnecessary. Although David might have been a member of the royal household, this need not mean he was personally acquainted with the king. Saul was at least twice his age, and it seems that David was employed specifically at times when Saul was at his worst, in the depths of depression, to assist in managing the king’s mental illness (16:14-23). It need not be surprising, therefore, that Saul appears to be unaware of David,\* even though he has in the past been acquainted with the youth when in the depths of depression. But now Saul is well aware of David, and from now on David will play a pivotal role in the decline of Saul.

1. *Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund for 1907*, quoted in *The Christadelphian*, Vol. 98 (1961), p. 457.

\* Saul had promised his daughter to the one who killed Goliath. The ancestry of this man would be of significance now, whereas not for his previous job of playing the harp before Saul.—E.D.M.

**Psalm 8**

The record of David and Goliath is redolent with types of the victory of Christ over sin, the saints over flesh, life over death. The remarkable placement of the skull in Jerusalem links it with similar records in Genesis 22 and the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Psalm 8 encapsulates these types, and Psalm 144 likewise relates to this episode.

The title of Psalm 8, "upon Muth-labben" (found at the beginning of Psalm 9), means, 'for the death of the champion'.<sup>2</sup> Several verses in Psalm 8 reveal links to 1 Samuel 17. Verse 2 celebrates the triumph of youth over its enemy, just as the stripling David overcame Goliath. But, as verse 2 also says, it was God's victory, not David's; Goliath was literally 'stilled' by God. Psalm 8:6 is also significant. In purely natural terms the Philistine should have had dominion over David, but it was not to be, because God "madest him [David] to have dominion", and of course Goliath ended up literally under David's feet (1 Sam. 17:51).

Verse 7 goes on to take up language that was used in 1 Samuel 17. David did not simply triumph, he "had dominion over . . . the beasts of

the field". This is surely an echo of David's claim that he had defeated a lion and a bear, and this Philistine, whom he likened to a wild animal, would suffer a similar fate (vv. 34-37). In verse 8 the parallel with 1 Samuel 17 continues. The dominion of which the psalmist speaks is not restricted to beasts of the field. It also extended to the fish of the sea. In 1 Samuel 17:5 Goliath is depicted as wearing armour comprised of scales of metal. He was imitating the Philistine god Dagon, half-man and half-fish, but he fell before the representative of the living God.

Psalm 8 is a wonderful paean to God's plan of redemption, to the power of the living God to deliver those who trust in Him. Having considered the parable of God's redemptive plan revealed in 1 Samuel 17, we can sing with the psalmist: "what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" (v. 4).

(Concluded)

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2. J. W. Thirtle outlines the links between 1 Samuel 17 and Psalm 8 in *The Titles of the Psalms*, pp. 70-75, Henry Frowde, London, 1905.



## Principles, Preaching and Problems

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# Should Christadelphians invest in stocks and shares?

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**T**HIS MIGHT SEEM a strange, almost irrelevant, question for many brethren and sisters, who may have difficulty in making ends meet financially. Yet perhaps for some brethren and sisters, either due to their prosperity, or occasionally other circumstances, the question of investing in stocks and shares does arise. This article sets out to show that Christadelphians should not invest in stocks and shares because this involves being joined together with unbelievers and being partakers of unjust gains.

### The camel and the rich man

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Mt. 19:24). These words of the Lord Jesus Christ are true, for a rich man is in serious danger of putting his trust in uncertain riches rather than in the Lord. As it is written in another place: "The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit"; but, interestingly, the preceding verse states by way of contrast: "The name of the LORD