

NOT WITH SWORD AND SPEAR

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From start to finish the Scriptures are about Christ. In the book of Genesis, after man's fall in to sin, the Lord said to the serpent who tempted the woman, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Genesis 3:15) In the Revelation, Saint John writes:

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. (Revelation 12:9, 10)

Jesus is the Christ, and the fulfillment of the Scriptures. He said to the Jews, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (John 5:39) After His resurrection, He explained this to His disciples:

"These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.." (Luke 24:44-47)

When Jesus' parents took Him from Egypt to Israel, this was, Saint Matthew writes, a fulfillment of the prophecy of Hosea. (Hosea 11:1) Jesus' dying so that the Roman soldier did not break his legs to hasten His death was, according to Saint John, a fulfillment of the typology of the Passover. (Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12; John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7) According to Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Jesus' resurrection was the fulfillment of a psalm of David (Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27; 13:35)

The student of Scripture also sees that the life of Jesus is prefigured in the lives of certain Old Testament saints, saints like Joseph. Joseph had eleven brothers, and his father favored him over them. "And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him." (Genesis 37:4) Joseph dreamed two dreams, the interpretation of which meant that his brothers would serve him. When he told his brothers of his dreams, his brothers envied him and they conspired to murder him. (Genesis 37:11) Reuben was the the eldest brother, the firstborn, and had the most to lose to Joseph; yet, he was more honorable than his brothers, and wished to spare Joseph. Before he could return Joseph home, however, the other brothers sold Joseph to some Midianites, who, in turn, sold him to Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard. Potiphar's wife falsely accused Joseph of attacking her, and so Joseph was put in prison. The Lord was with Joseph, however, and gave him favor with the jailer, so that the jailer gave Joseph charge over the prison. Finally, the Lord vindicated Joseph, and he was released from prison. What is more, Pharaoh made Joseph ruler over Egypt, second only to himself. Joseph was betrayed by his brothers, falsely

accused and imprisoned, and ultimately made ruler of all. Joseph had been laid low by his rivals, but he waited on the Lord, and, in due time, the Lord exalted him.

The story of David is similar to that of Joseph, and different from that of Saul. God chose David, son of Jesse, a wealthy man, to replace Saul as the ruler over Israel, but Saul would not allow it. When the children of Israel demanded an earthly king to rule over them, God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, a powerful man. Saul's reign as king began in humility, but personal pride soon took root in his heart. When Samuel the prophet, at the Lord's instructions, first went to Saul to anoint him king, he said to Saul, "For ye shall eat with me to day, and to morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that *is* in thine heart." (1 Samuel 9:19) It seems it was always in Saul's heart to reign in Israel. He hated the Philistines, for they were cruel, and they occupied the land of Israel, and he wished to drive them out. Nevertheless, when Samuel the prophet wished to present the new king to the people, Saul was reluctant, and hid himself. The people had to search for him, and bring him out. In time, however, Saul became too bold, and saw the kingdom as his own possession, and the enemies of the realm as his own enemies. Before Saul engaged the Philistines at Michmash, some of his soldiers deserted. Worried that his numbers would be too few to defeat the enemy, he did not wait for Samuel to arrive and to offer sacrifice to the Lord; he himself offered the sacrifice, in defiance of the command of the Lord. He impertinently performed a service that was not his to perform, because he believed more in military might, than in God's might. Later, Saul placed his men under oath, saying, "Cursed *be* the man that eateth *any* food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies." Saul's interest changed, it seems, from public welfare to personal power. When he again disobeyed the command of the Lord, and spared Agag, king of the Amalekites, and the best livestock, Samuel the prophet rebuked him. Saul replied, "I have sinned: *yet* honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God." Saul was concerned about his own glory, and not the glory of God. He did not concern himself with how he might defeat his enemies, so long as he defeated them. He would do it with, or without the Lord, even if it meant consulting a medium. (1 Samuel 28:7-25)

Before yet another battle with the Philistines, the giant Goliath, mocked the people of God. When David heard him, he said, "What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who *is* this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" David, unlike Saul, was concerned with dishonor brought upon God and His people. He wished to vindicate God. His oldest brother, Eliab, whom Samuel the prophet had passed over to anoint David as the king to replace Saul, resented his brother, and said to him, "Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle." Eliab accused his brother of neglecting his duty of tending the sheep, and of coming to the battlefield so that he might observe the carnage of battle. It was, of course, the heart of Eliab that was proud and wicked. God had chosen David to replace Saul as king, and had passed over Eliab, because David was a man after God's own heart. (1 Samuel 13:14) David convinced Saul to allow him to fight Goliath, but David did not wear the armor given him by Saul, nor did he wield the weapon given him by Saul. David approached the giant, and said to him:

Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this

assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle *is* the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands. (1 Samuel 17:45-47)

Saul relied on the might of his army, but David relied upon the might of the Lord. The Lord was with David, and he defeated Goliath the giant. David slung a stone at Goliath, the stone found its mark, and it crushed the skull of the giant. Then the Israelites attacked the Philistines, and drove them back to their own cities. Josephus the ancient historian sets the number of Philistine dead at thirty-thousand, and the number of wounded at twice that number. (Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 1.6.9.5) When the army of Israel returned from battle, the women entered filled the streets, singing and dancing, and saying, “And the women answered *one another* as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” (1 Samuel 18:7) Saul’s won the victory over the Philistines, but he could not enjoy it because of his envy of David. The Scriptures say, “And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *but* thousands: and *what* can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.” (1 Samuel 18:8, 9) Saul was jealous for his kingdom. He worried that David might, with the support of the people, usurp his throne. He had reason to worry, for God had told him that he had rejected him as king. Yet, Saul was wrong to be jealous, as the kingdom did not belong to him, but to another. So, the king looked at David with an evil eye. He was envious of David, not only desiring for himself the praise that David received from the people, but wishing David harm. The king made several attempts on David’s life, and so David was forced to flee from him and to go into hiding. For some time, Saul pursued David, and threatened his life. While in these straits David wrote several psalms, pouring out his heart out God, and praying to him for relief. In the Fifty-ninth Psalm, he prayed, “Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.” (Psalm 59:1) Never did David, like Saul, take matters into his own hands. Although he had more than one opportunity to kill Saul, he did not seize them, because Saul remained the anointed king. Years later, when Saul was losing a battle with the Philistines, and he was gravely wounded, he killed himself. Then the men of Judah anointed David king over Judah. David had been laid low by his rival, but he waited on the Lord, and, in due time, the Lord exalted him.

In certain respects, the lives of Joseph and of David foreshadowed the life of Christ. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, but His own brothers did not believe in Him, and His family said he was out of His mind. (Mark 3:21; John 7:5) The people of Israel did not believe in Him. As Saint John writes in his Gospel, “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” (John 1:11) It is true, that some did follow Him because of the miracles He performed, and some did believe He might be the Christ; however, many, especially those with religious authority, rejected Him. And why did they reject Him? They gave various reasons. He overturned the tables of the money-changers. (John 2:12-25) They said He was from Galilee, whereas the Christ was to be born in Bethlehem. (John 7:40-53) They said He was a Sabbath-breaker. (Matthew 12:10) They said He was a glutton and a drunk. (Matthew 11:19) They said He associated with sinners. (Luke 7:39) He did not follow all of their traditions. (Matthew 15:1-9) They said He was a blasphemer. (Matthew 26:65) They feared that the people would make Him king, and then the Romans would destroy the city of Jerusalem and the people. (John 11:48) These, however, were all cloaks for their true motive: to protect their positions of power and influence. Jesus had consistently criticized them for their love of money and power. (Luke 16:1-14) He said of them, “But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.” (Matthew 23:5-7) Jesus, by exposing them, threatened their standing before the people. Moreover, the people were following Jesus, and the Pharisees resented Him for

it. When the Pharisees and chief priests sent officers to arrest Jesus, the officers returned without Him, because they were moved by His teaching. The Pharisees were incensed, and said to the officers, “Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.” (John 7:47-49) Jesus, in His parable of the ten Minas, foretold of the Jew’s rejection of Him. “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us.” (Luke 19:12-14) When the religious leaders finally arrested Jesus, and turned Him over to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, for prosecution, Pilate wished to release Him, “for he knew that for envy they had delivered him.” (Matthew 27:18) The religious leaders had their way, however, and Pilate had Jesus scourged and crucified. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only perfect man, was rejected by His own, and humiliated, because of their envy. They would rule, and would not have Him rule over them. God, however, governs His creation by a principle which is contrary to human reason and pride. Jesus, when He was once invited to dine in the home of the chief Pharisees, taught this principle to the host and his guests.

And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. (Luke 14:7-11)

It is the way of the world to seek to rule over men. It is the way of God to serve men. The Son of God humbled Himself, not simply so that He could rule over men, but so that He might redeem men. Jesus said:

Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Matthew 20:25-28)

Jesus had been laid low by his rivals, but he waited on the Lord, and, in due time, the Lord exalted him. The Bible is about the Christ, the Son of the living God, who humbled Himself that He might be Lord and Savior of the world.

Let us see Christ in all of Scripture. Let us put our trust in Him, and not in ourselves. Let us not envy. Let us follow the example of the humility of the Son of God, and serve one another.

Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. *Amen.*