

Do You Recognize God's Messiah?

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[0 : 00] 1 Samuel 17, starting at 41. And the Philistine said to David, Come to me and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field.

Then David said to the Philistine, You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defiled.

This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth.

That all Israel may know that there is a God in Israel. Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with the sword and spear.

For the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hands. So it was when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David.

[1 : 32] And David hurried and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead.

So that the stone sank into his forehead. And he fell on his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone and struck the Philistine and killed him.

But there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him. And cut off his head with it.

And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled. Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley into the gates of Ekron.

And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Sharaim, even as far as Gath and Ekron. Then the children of Israel returned from chasing the Philistine and they plundered their tents.

[2 : 43] And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem. But he put his armor in his tent. When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, Abner, whose son is this youth?

And Abner said, as your soul lives, O king, I do not know. So the king said, inquire whose son this young man is. Then as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

We'll save the last verse, 58 for chapter 18. The word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God. Please be seated. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of the Lord stands forever.

Please pray with me. O God, we ask you by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, through the earthen vessel of the preacher, that you will show your people Christ.

We pray that you will please exalt your name. Help us to trust and have our minds filled with the awesome work that you accomplished to save your people, to defend us from the enemy.

[4 : 23] We thank you, Lord, for how you are so exalted and how week after week you minister in ways that no one can understand or explain other than it's you being faithful to your promise.

We trust that you will do that again today for your glory. Amen. The classic thinker Marcus Aurelius observed, Those things you think about determine the quality of your mind.

Your soul takes on the color of your thoughts. I invite you to reflect with me on this morning, this week. What is the color of your soul?

What is the quality of your mind? Israel's army had their minds filled with Goliath's accusations, with his lies, with his blasphemy.

The armies of Israel, they started to believe these accusations, believe these lies. They started to think so little of God.

[5 : 33] And when God's anointed one, the anointed shepherd who would become the king, when he shows up on the scene of the battle, the armies of Israel failed to recognize God's anointed one.

Remember how the word anointed in Hebrew is Messiah. And to recognize the Messiah. According to Webster's Dictionary of 1828, to recognize means to recollect or to recover the knowledge of. God has promised from the very beginning in Genesis chapter 3, there will be a promised seed who will crush the serpent's head.

Be looking for this champion, this head crusher. And you and I can be much like Israel. Especially when we're tired, maybe we're battling sniffles and things like that.

But it's so easy in our weakness to let our minds and our hearts be filled with anything else than God. And when our minds are filled with thoughts from this world, our thoughts of God drop.

[6 : 46] See, Israel became functional atheists. And we want to pray that God will help us once again to think on him from his word as he's revealed himself to us.

To think on the one, the only, true God who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. See, this God that crushes the head of the enemy in 1 Samuel 17 is the same God you and I worship. And it's pointing us to the one and only, true Messiah, true anointed one, Jesus Christ. So my invitation for you and for me as we walk through this passage is to let God fill our minds with the Messiah.

And make sure we recognize God's Messiah in Jesus Christ. Here are five observations from this passage pointing to Jesus as the Messiah.

We see in what God sent David to do how no one else will shield God's Messiah. No one will shield God's Messiah.

[7 : 58] Well, here comes the Philistine. And notice how in verse 43, he's not only taunting the armies of Israel, he's invoking curses upon them by his own gods.

We know something of the gods of the Philistines. Remember when the Ark of the Covenant was taken into the temple of Dagon? That was one of their gods. And how did that story end?

With Dagon, the idol, fallen flat on his face and his head crushed. We can only imagine what some of these curses might have been.

I let my imagination run with it a little bit. So take it as that only. Goliath could have said, I invoke the name of Dagon, even this crushed idol of theirs.

He was the God of the harvest and the bounty. To make your fields, Israelites, will be my fields. You can almost picture Goliath, you know, dreaming of eating the grapes and feasting himself on what was once Israel's.

[9 : 02] I invoke the name of Ashtoreth, the goddess of war, to give me power to crush you. I invoke the name of Baal, God of the storms and fertility, to make your wives barren and strike you with lightning.

It's a spiritual battle now that we have. Goliath invoking these demons. And then, holding that up in the face of God's armies, the Lord of hosts.

Bragging to them what it will be like for him to feast on bread from the wheat fields that they had grown and to drink wine from the vineyards they had tended. In verse 43, Goliath makes it evident that he is a blasphemer.

He is speaking lies about the one true God. And he's worshiping these demons, causing Israel to fear the demons more than the one true God.

Leviticus 24, 16 gives this law. Anyone who blasphemes the name of the Lord must be stoned to death. And in Judges chapter 20, verse 16, we're told how Benjamites were experts with the sling.

[10 : 21] John pointed out last week how Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin. Saul was given the power of the sword to execute this civil law.

But here is the tallest man of Israel, Israel's Goliath, passive, hiding. It's like he said, here am I, Lord, send someone else.

So Goliath was ready to make God's army his slaves. He had disgraced them now for 40 days, morning and evening. The accuser's fear tactics froze the armies of God.

The accuser's posturing had paralyzed them. They had listened to this scale-covered blasphemer till he became a symbol in their minds of Satan, the tormentor himself.

They became functional non-believers. In verse 10, the Philistine had said, I defy the ranks of Israel this day.

[11:25] Give me a man that we may fight together. We're told that this champion went out to fight as the one man, the representative, the federal head of the whole Philistine kingdom.

And it stood out to me recently, this week, how in verse 41, he didn't go out alone. Look at verse 41. The Philistine came and he began drawing near to David and the man who bore the shield went before him.

So from the Philistine side in the south, there was the armies of the Philistines and in front of them was Goliath. And in front of Goliath, a shield. Well, what about from the side of Judah, the side of Israel?

We didn't hear of anyone going in front of David. If it had been Jonathan going out to battle, we know that Jonathan had an armor bearer. And so if the prince had an armor bearer, certainly the king had an armor bearer.

And if they're following the patterns of the world, that's how you would expect them to match, like for like. We send a man out with the shield, you send a man out with the shield. We send our champion behind him, you send your champion behind him.

[12:39] Now let him go at it. King Saul was Israel's Goliath. Either King Saul or the crown prince of Jonathan, the only two who had weapons in all of Israel, should have been leading the way for Israel.

But instead we get this little shepherd boy. In verse 44, the Philistine said to David, Come to me and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field.

He's saying this is going to be too easy. You're going to be eaten up by the wild creatures. You're going to turn to dust. So there our scene is set.

There goes the champion of God's people, unexpected. A shepherd, but anointed. A shadow of the ultimate Messiah.

Remember the name of this valley, the valley of the oak tree? So there stood David in the valley of the tree. No one to shield him in front, representing the whole nation of Israel behind him.

[13:57] Israel could expect when the Messiah comes, there will be no one to shield God's Messiah. The second observation, pointing to the Messiah, is that the Messiah will fight to magnify God's glory.

The Messiah will fight to magnify God's glory. The whole nation of Israel is frozen. And yet Proverbs 16, 18 says that pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.

How will God be true to this? How will God show that his name and his glory will be vindicated?

Well, God does not match boasting of the world with more boasting.

The Messiah will fight to magnify God's glory. Look at verse 45. Then David said to the Philistine, You come at me with a sword, with a spear, with a javelin.

And now he gives four reasons for why he will fight. Reason number one. He says, But I come for the honor of God's name.

[15:04] He says, I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defiled. You have defiled the name of God, the Lord of the armies of Israel and the armies of heaven, the Lord of hosts.

I come to you in his name. See, the Messiah will fight to magnify the honor of God's name. In verse 46, we have a second reason. This day, David says, His reason is to prove that the deliverance will be God-given.

The Lord will deliver the armies of Israel, whom you have defiled, into my hand. And I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give it as a carpus of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth.

The Messiah will prove that God's deliverance is not something man could do for man's self. It's something God would do for his people. And in taking the accusation of the enemy to give the body of this one little boy, David, to the wild beasts, David multiplies that now.

Look what David says. He says, I'm going to give the bodies of all the army, all the carcasses of the entire army to be devoured, to prove that God is mightier and that he is the one who gives deliverance.

[16:31] And the third reason is what we could call God-centered evangelism. Why will the Messiah fight? He says in verse 46 that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

He will fight as God's anointed one to magnify God's glory in all the earth. And the fourth reason in verse 47, Then so also God's people will know how God saves.

All the assembly, the army, the Israelites will know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's. And he will give it into our hands.

See, the people of God need to learn this lesson over and over and again. How is it that God saves? God saves in a way that he gets all the glory.

God does not save in the ways of the world. God will deliver his people, but he will do it in a way that man cannot boast. He will bring his victory and make his people share in it.

[17 : 40] But the Messiah will do that for God's glory and share none of that glory with man. So when the Messiah comes, what can we expect? What should we look for?

We should look for a Messiah who will fight to magnify God's glory. The third observation is that God's Messiah will run to execute God's will.

God's Messiah will run to execute God's will. Notice how in this standoff, it's the enemy who initiates the attack. He rises to crush God's anointed.

The lesser seed of Eve, David. We read in verse 48, So it was when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, thinking this is going to be so easy.

David then hurried and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. In verse 49, Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and he slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead so that the stone sank into his forehead and he fell on his face to the earth.

[18 : 49] Goliath, the mouthpiece of these demons, now shares the fate of the demons he worshipped. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone and struck the Philistine and killed him.

But there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore, David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it.

And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. So in verse 50, we're told that the stone struck Goliath and killed him.

And then in verse 51, we're told that David took out the sword and killed him. You could say Goliath was killed twice, once with the stone and once with the sword, twice dead.

I don't want to read more into this than what's there. But notice how David had already been made a prophet by God in verse 46.

[19 : 56] Look back at verse 46. The spirit anointed man tells Goliath, I will strike you and I will take your head from you. I'm going to do those two things.

So as he goes rushing at Goliath, he simply carries out what God's spirit caused him to say. You could call it a spirit-empowered instinct. As soon as he saw Goliath collapse with his face in the dirt, he sprints toward Goliath and he did what God told him he would do.

It's interesting how he had to be killed by a stone and also killed by a sword. Leviticus, remember? Anyone who blasphemes the name of the Lord must be stoned to death.

Goliath was killed by the stone. And he was also killed by the sword that cut off his head. In Genesis 9, verses 5 and 6, we read that lifeblood requires a reckoning.

Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed. For God made man in his own image. The king, God's anointed Messiah, will not wield the sword in vain.

[21 : 12] The king of God's people will execute justice with God-given authority. And so the Messiah will one day run to execute God's will, fulfilling all of God's law.

Fourth observation is that the Messiah will share his victory with God's people. The Messiah will share his victory with God's people. In verse 52, we read how the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley into the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Sharaim as far as Gath and Ekron. So the champion executes the victory.

He's the one who accomplishes it. And then all the army that was paralyzed in fear, they charge following this great defeat of the champion and they pursue the enemy. The same people that once tormented and mocked them.

They get to share in the victory. They're now on the offensive. They're attacking with confidence. They're trusting that their God is in fact mightier than anything these accusers can hurl at us anymore.

[22 : 29] In verse 53, we read, Then the children of Israel returned from chasing the Philistine and they plundered their tents. Not only do they share in the victory, they share in the spoils of victory.

That wealth, that might that they once feared has now been given to them. The Lord of hosts, the Lord of God's armies reminds his people, I have everything you need in abundance.

It is all yours. You will lack nothing in my army. And so the Messiah one day will share the victory he accomplishes with his people.

The fifth observation is that the Messiah will keep the sign of his victory before the eyes of God's people. The Messiah will keep the sign of his victory before the eyes of God's people.

Well, you know what the sign of this victory was for David. Look at verse 54. David took the head of the Philistine. And Deanna mentioned in the Bible study how a human head weighs eight pounds.

[23 : 41] And so if Goliath was about twice that size of the average man, 16 pounds is a good guess. It's a big head. And that's what David took. And when I prepared this, I didn't realize we'd have so many little children with us as I get a little bit graphic with the head of Goliath here.

But I'll do my best. And I hope it helps them to see how this was a sign of the victory. I should warn us all as well.

2 Timothy 3.16 does tell us that all scripture is breathed out by God and profitable. Profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, including these four verses or so about the head of Goliath.

So notice what it says next, that David takes the head of Goliath and brings it to Jerusalem and put his armor in his tent.

I think that this is written and confirmed by the scribes and preserved and canonized the scripture after David is already king.

[24 : 52] It's like the rising of Samuel, now the rising of David, and then the fall of David as well.

And so when it refers to Jerusalem, I take that reference to be like kind of skipping ahead and where will this head of Goliath ultimately end up in Jerusalem once it becomes the headquarters for Israel.

2 Samuel 5.4 tells us that David was 30 years old when he began to reign. And then Jerusalem became the capital about seven years after David became king.

We know that David was younger because he was not old enough to be in the army. He wasn't 20. And there were other brothers even older than him that were also not old enough to be in the army. So even if David was about 15 years old, right now in chapter 17, David would have kept this head of Goliath for many years until it finally would arrive at his court in Jerusalem.

So here's this head of Goliath. And here's this little shepherd boy carrying it around with him as a trophy of this great victory. Eventually, he would have to let the skin and the flesh of this head be picked apart by the birds and the jackals and maggots.

[26 : 04] And then this huge skull would have to be preserved and kept with David. 15 plus seven years for about 22 years. And then whenever you go to visit David and you enter the royal tent in the palace of King David, you would see this head of a giant.

For all God's people to be reminded of the victory, the king would keep the sign of his victory before the eyes of God's people. We read in verse 55, When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, Abner, whose son is this youth?

Doesn't say he didn't recognize David, just wants to know who is his dad, which is the household here that's not paying taxes for life. And Abner said, As your soul lives, O king, I do not know.

So the king said, I inquire, inquire whose son this young man is. Verse 57, Then as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul and the head of the Philistine in his hand.

What a sight. The king who wanted to be like the world, facing God's anointed shepherd king, the one carrying the sign of the victory that God gave, just as God promised he would do.

[27 : 33] And here's all of Israel watching now, this formal ceremony, this meeting. The king on his way out who does not have the spirit of God and the king that God has promised, that's the anointed Messiah, with all the army watching on.

When you see the anointed one, he will carry with him the sign of his victory over our enemy, with him wherever he goes, for all to remember.

The Messiah will keep the sign of his victory before the eyes of his people. Well, brothers and sisters and dear friends, I invite you to recognize Jesus Christ is the Messiah.

Recollect, recover again today, the knowledge of God the Savior in the work of his Messiah, the anointed one.

There was David in the valley of the tree alone, an unexpected champion, and there hung Jesus Christ in the valley of death, on a tree, all alone.

[28 : 51] There was no one to shield David as God's anointed Messiah. Think of that same scene set up. Here's all God's people condemned, accused.

And the anointed Messiah himself steps in front of all the people. There was no one else to bear a shield in front of Christ, because Christ would be the shield bearer for his people.

God's anointed shepherd king took the wrath that his enemies deserve. The Messiah did this to magnify God's glory.

John 17, 4, Jesus declares to his Father, I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. Jesus Christ proved that our deliverance had to be God-given.

Verse 46 of our passage today, so that all the earth may know that there is one true God, that God's people will trust in the Lord and know that the battle is the Lord's.

[30 : 13] He alone has put victory into our hands. 2 Corinthians 2, 14 invites us as God's army to give thanks to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession.

And through us, he spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. The enemy initiated the attack against Jesus. He's praying in the garden and he comes and captures our Lord.

Satan rose up to crush God's anointed through the lashes, through the beatings, through the blood. And our Lord Jesus Christ, he ran to the cross, so to speak.

He set his face like flint. He did not hesitate. It was a joy for him to go fight the fight and accomplish what his Father gave him to do to save his people.

They captured our Lord Jesus. They unjustly accused him, tortured him. And all of this was the serpent striking at his heel. And it's really the same motion of his heel stomping down to crush the serpent's head that he is bruised for our transgressions.

[31 : 30] Jesus is the ultimate promised seed of Eve. Our Lord Jesus Christ crushed the head of the scale-covered dragon, Satan.

Colossians 2.15, which we read, says he disarmed the principalities and powers. He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, is victorious. The enemy is collapsed before him. And he shares his victory with his people.

Listen to these verses. You know these verses, but listen to how glorious this victory of Christ shared with his people. Romans 8.33, Who shall bring a charge against all of you who follow Christ, who are God's elect?

It is God who justifies. It is he who has set us free, who is there to condemn. It is Christ who died and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

[32 : 42] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword?

No. In all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. The cowardly army sharing in the victory, receiving all the spoils of the victory that Christ accomplished now more than conquers through him.

Now listen to Revelation 12.10, what Christ has already accomplished spiritually. One day he will finish off consummately. The apostle John reports the vision God gave him.

I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, now salvation and strength in the kingdom of our God and the power of his kingdom have come for the accuser of our brethren who accused them before our God day and night has been cast down.

Amen. So brothers and sisters, Jesus calls us to take up the cross. The cross is Christ's Goliath's head.

[33 : 58] The symbol of his victory over sin, Satan, death and hell. And he says, follow me as king of your life.

He calls us to pursue, to chase, to run with confidence after King Jesus, trusting that he has all might, all authority.

No accusation from the enemy can stick on God's people. He has all dominion. Sin has no power over God's people anymore.

Do you recognize this Messiah? He will keep the sign of his victory before the eyes of God's people wherever he goes.

And he's told his church, do this, this remembrance of my cross. As often as you eat this bread, my body, and drink this wine, my blood, you celebrate God's victory in Jesus Christ.

[35 : 05] Christ. Let's thank our Lord for the Messiah, the King of Kings, the anointed warrior who's our good shepherd.

We follow him wherever he calls us to go. Let's pray. O Lord, we thank you for how you do fill our minds with the glorious gospel of your work.

We thank you for the deliverance, the great victory that you accomplished for your glory, for your namesake. We thank you that you share all that you accomplished, Lord, with your people and you do this freely.

Help us to receive Christ again and all that is his you make ours and to receive this, Lord, with hearts full of joy and lives that respond in pure gratitude.

It's a joy to obey you, to follow you as our king, to have you rule over us, your people. Amen. Amen.