

### The battle belongs to the Lord

Israel and the Philistines were at war - again! They arranged their forces on opposite sides of a valley. This made it risky for either army to begin an attack. By descending one slope, crossing the valley floor and its stream, and climbing up the other side, the attackers would make themselves vulnerable. The result was a stalemate; neither army dared to leave its position.

It was Goliath who provided a solution. He boastfully challenged anyone in Israel to a one-on-one confrontation. This encounter would decide the battle and the war.

The most important detail that the Bible gives us about Goliath is not his size, his armour or his challenge to God's people. The most important detail is given in the word "defy." This word means "to treat with contempt or ridicule." Goliath defied "the armies of the living God" (1 Sam 17:26). He treated God with contempt. He mocked the Almighty.

But God had chosen David to be his servant. Bound up in David is the power of God, the honour of God, and the glory of God. Advancing towards the giant is David, God's chosen instrument to overcome an enemy who defied him.

David answered Goliath's challenge, because the LORD was with him. Victory and defeat was in the hands of the LORD. Not in the hands of David or his ridiculous "weapon" - a sling and a stone. It was God who defeated Goliath - not David or his sling.

David's victory made a statement to the Philistines, the Israelites and to us: that the name of the LORD is sufficient to strike the strongest enemy to the ground. The battle belongs to the Lord (1 Sam 17: 47), and the Lord will give his enemy into our hands, however insufficient our defence may be.

To save us from every enemy, God once more has a chosen instrument - it is Jesus Christ, his eternal Son. God still defeats the enemy without sword or spear. He still uses what seems completely inadequate to save us. Of all things, God uses a cross and a grave, a crucifixion and a resurrection.

He uses what seems to be weak, to put the strong to shame.

He uses his Son, dying on the cross and arising from the grave, to defeat the powers of darkness. As always, the battle belongs to the Lord.

As always it is not our weapons that make the difference - it is God.

Because the battle belongs to the LORD, and so does the victory.

Be blessed when the Lord, through his almighty Christ, conquers his enemies through you, today!