

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

He stood before a giant. He stood without armor, without sword, without shield. And yet there he stood, the future of Israel on his shoulders, in faith – faith not in armor, faith not in weapons, faith not in an army to protect him, but faith in the Name of the Lord of Hosts. The first of his five smooth stones found its mark, and the unconquerable giant fell lifeless. The faith of the young shepherd who would rule Israel received its reward. He was delivered by the Lord of Hosts. Israel was spared.

Not long after, the same God, the Lord of Hosts, appeared to David and promised to establish his kingdom and his house forever. As impossible as his victory over Goliath was, even more impossible was the promise that God now made him. He was a mere man, with the impulses and desires of any fallen man. And yet the faith with which he slew the giant was the same faith that received God's promise. From his loins would God bring forth the long-promised Savior. The True King would be God's Son, David's Son, and of His Kingdom and of His reign there would be no end.

But not long after, the same David that prevailed over the giant, the same David that received the Messianic Promise, would lust after the wife of another man. And that lust would drive him to commit murder and adultery. How could he fall from such heights? How could a man with the very promise of God sin so wantonly? Had he forgotten that God appeared to him? Did he not already have enough wives? Did he not remember his victory over the giant? Could he not have controlled himself? Had he forgotten the promises?

From David we learn a lot about ourselves. Like David, we too are well aware of the promises of God. Most men are. The Gospel, the Truth of Christ crucified and risen, is preached to the very corners of the earth. Still unbelief prevails in most the world. Men choose other gods, man-made gods, gods that reward them as they see fit, as they think best, gods designed to satisfy the sensibilities of fallen, sinful, twisted men.

They are fleshly men who imagine gods that meet the needs of their flesh. Rather than hearkening to the Word of God, they reject it, and craft their own systems of right and wrong, their own mores and morals, their own values, values quite at odds with the clear Word of God. They fill the world with their lies, and most men believe them. They come to think they are too big to fail, that they have the majority on their side, that they outnumber the faithful, indeed that they outnumber God.

And like that delusional, armor clad, weapon bearing mercenary giant who thought he could prevail over the young shepherd, every man who rejects the Word of God will fall. For the smooth stone that fells them is the Chief Cornerstone, the stone the builders rejected. And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.

And so it will be to every man that sins. For every sin, every choosing of fleshly things over the things of God, is idolatry. That is what you have done each time you have sinned. As David put God's promises behind him and chose rather the wife of the Hittite, you, like David, have known God's promises, but still you have yielded to the tugs and snares of your flesh, the fallen world, and the devil.

With every lustful thought, with every jealous impulse, with every angry word, every word of gossip or malice, with every doubt of God's clear Word, you have turned your back on the eternal Gifts of the Lord of Hosts, and chosen the momentary and fleeting enticements of the sinful world.

But in the very Words of David there is a promise for you. Consider David's prayer: "For You, Lord GOD, know Your servant. For Your word's sake, and according to Your own heart, You have done all these great things, to make Your servant know them. Therefore You are great, O Lord GOD."

God is faithful, even when men are not. God knows you. He has given you His Word. He who is mighty has done great things for you, and Holy is His Name. He keeps His promises. His promises are sure. His grace is superabundant. His love knows no bounds. He is merciful.

And in His great mercy, in His love for you, He gave the Promised Son of David, the Son of Bathsheba, the Son of Solomon, the Son of Mary, over to death. The Son of God took on flesh, took on your sins, and died for you. He Whose Kingdom is eternal suffered Himself to be cut off. He Who is the rightful owner of the heavenly throne endured the cross. He who is the True Shepherd King of Israel was stricken, and the sheep scattered. But by that scattering, God worked the preaching of the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

The Promise of God is sure. His Kingdom is eternal, His reign is without end. In a seemingly impossible victory, He conquered death and rose from the dead. He overcame the giants that you could not – death, the devil, your flesh, and this sinful world. Christ is your Champion, the One who fought and won the victory for all men. He won life for you. He won forgiveness for you. He won reconciliation with God for you. And it is all yours, simply by believing in His Promise. For the Promise that works faith in you is the very Promise to which your faith clings.

You do not demand signs and wonders. Like the nobleman, you believe His Word. You believe His salvific proclamation, the Word that works what He promises. He bespeaks you righteous, He declares you healed, and believing, you are what He declares you to be. You believe the Word that He speaks, and you go your way, restored, forgiven, believing. You go your way through this life clinging to His Promise, trusting in His love and mercy, believing that what He did He did for you. And upon you God showers His blessings.

So humbled by God's grace, thankful for His mercy and Gifts, in awe of His power and might, your faith asks with King David "Who am I, O Lord GOD?" And the answer is that you are His beloved child, the redeemed of Christ, the chaste and pure Bride, unworthy of His Promises and yet chosen by Him from eternity, the recipient of His boundless grace and love.

And your faith declares with Saint David "O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your words are true, and You have promised this goodness to Your servant." And by the faith God gives you, you stand against the giants of your life, against the Philistines of this world, knowing they are bigger and outnumber you, and yet trusting in the victory that Christ has already won for you.

When the days are difficult, from the depths of woe you cry out to God, and He hears you. He delivers you. You return all Praise to God, Who Reigns Above. But you can't outgive God. He

blesses you with Holy Absolution. He blesses you with His Body and Blood, which He gives you to eat and drink. He vests you in His righteousness.

“Go your way; your son lives.’ So the man believed the word that ✠Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.” And so do you, dear Christian. You go the Way of Righteousness, the Way of Salvation. Filled with God’s Spirit, you put on the full armor of God, the armor Goliath couldn’t see, the armor that protected David, the armor donned by the nobleman, faith in Christ. Enveloped by God’s grace and wrapped in His panoply, you go your way, led by the Spirit of God, victorious in Christ, trusting in the Promises of God.

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.