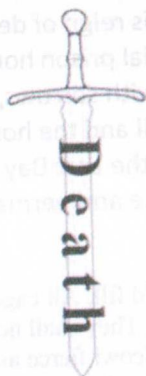


The
mighty
weapon of
the Devil



The
mighty
weapon of
God

It was a strange and dreadful strife
When Life and Death contended;
The victory remained with Life,
The reign of Death was ended;
Holy Scripture plainly saith
That Death is swallowed up by Death,
His sting is lost forever.

Hallelujah!

L.H. 195 v. 2

Part Two God's Use of Death as a Powerful Weapon

Hebrews 2:14-15 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself [Jesus] likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

When God saw the death into which Adam and Eve fell because of their sin of disobedience, He also looked ahead to see that death would come to every human being because each would be born in sin, go on to commit innumerable sins, and leave this world through physical death for the proper punishment of eternal death. Out of His great and deep love He was moved to do something about death.

So then, just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin, so also death spread to all people because all sinned.

Romans 5:12 (EHV)

One part was pretty straightforward. He would use His power to crush the devil and bring to an end his reign of death on earth. To that end, the LORD God prepared a special prison house called hell. It is escape proof and eternal and is filled with sorrows, pains and sufferings. It was especially designed for the devil and the host of evil angels. In addition, the LORD picked a special day, the Last Day, also known as Judgment Day, for sentencing to take place and permanent confinement to begin and never end.

Tho' devils all the world should fill, All eager to devour us,
We tremble not, we fear no ill, They shall not overpow'r us.
This world's prince may still Scowl fierce as he will,
He can harm us none, He's judged; the deed is done;
One little word can fell him.

L.H. 262 v. 3

The other part of the equation, how to rescue mankind from death, could not be achieved so easily nor could it be done by a mighty display of power, not if there was to be a rescue from death. His love found the way and the most unimaginable plan was devised. The LORD would use death to overcome death. The rescue plan that was developed by the love of God the Father called for His Son to taste death for all sinners, that is, to die in their place. This is the power of love at work, not the raw power of brute force.

To die, the Son of God would need a human body, but not just any human body. Our bodies are born with the defect of sin inherited from sinful parents. The love of the LORD God planned a different birth for the Savior of the world. A human mother would become pregnant by the Holy Spirit and that child would be born holy. Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of Man, was born without sin. Part of the plan was in place.

Now came the hard part. Jesus, the Son of God and Creator of all things in the world, had to put Himself under God's Holy Law and live a life without any sin, 24/7, for 30 + years. He had to be perfect in every thought, every word and every act. He was successful in all this, doing what no other human being has ever done.

[Jesus] was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.
Hebrews 4:15b

Finally, came the hardest part of the whole plan. The Lord of Life had to die, to bear the punishment for the sins of the world. The appeal process in the Garden of Gethsemane for a different plan was denied. Jesus appeared before the Judgment Seat of the Holy God and took on the curse of death, when at Calvary the Father turned His back on His Son. The crushing agony of hell and death fell on Jesus. The three hours of total darkness over all the earth testified to what was happening at the throne of God in heaven. The Judge declared Jesus "guilty" and sentenced Him with the curse of death.

With His death on Good Friday, Jesus took the place of every sinner. His blood atoned for all sins for all. He exchanged His life of righteousness for our life of unrighteousness. God now looks on every human being as holy, without sin, and therefore not subject to the penalty of eternal death in hell.

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
2 Corinthians 5:21

The sinless Son of God must die in sadness;
The sinful child of man may live in gladness;
Man forfeited his life and is acquitted,
God is committed.

L.H. 143:5

But the plan needed one more step: the dead Jesus rose from the dead. With His Resurrection on Easter morning, Jesus received the final seal of approval from the Father and proved Himself the mighty champion over death.

[Jesus said] "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."

John 10:18a

The Holy Spirit uses forceful terms to describe what happened.

II Timothy 1:10b [our Savior Jesus Christ,] has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

I Corinthians 15:26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

I Corinthians 15:54c "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

With His death and Resurrection Jesus destroyed the devil and wrestled away from him the power of death.

Now the sword of death is no longer in the control of the one who hates us and seeks to ruin us. The sword of death is now in the control of the One Who loves us so dearly and seeks to bless us.

[Jesus said] "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death."

Revelation 1:18

He is arisen! Glorious Word!
Now reconciled is God, my Lord;
the gates of heav'n are open.
My Jesus did triumphant die,
And Satan's arrows broken lie,
Destroyed hell's fiercest weapon.
O hear what cheer! Christ victorious,
rising glorious, life is giving, He was dead but now is living!

C.W. 461