

HELL HAS NO POWER! – by Rt. Rev. Bradley D. Heinrichs

Mark 10:27.

And Jesus looking at them says, “With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.”

Numbers 13:30-33.

30 And Caleb made the people keep silent before Moses, and said, Going up let us go up, and possess it; for prevailing we will prevail against it.

31 But the men who went up with him said, We are not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.

32 And they brought out an evil report of the land which they had explored to the sons of Israel, saying, The land, which we have passed through to explore it, it is a land that eats up those dwelling in her; and all the people that we saw in the midst of it are men of measure.

33 And there we saw the Nephilim, the sons of Anak, who are from the Nephilim; and we were in our own eyes as grasshoppers, and so we were in their eyes.

I Samuel 17:4-49 (parts).

4 And there went out a man, a champion, from the camp of the Philistines; his name was Goliath, from Gath; he was six cubits and a span tall....

10 And the Philistine said, I have reproached the battle array of Israel this day; give me a man and let us fight together.

11 And Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, and they were dismayed and feared exceedingly....

32 And David said to Saul, Let not the heart of man fall on account of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go to this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art a lad, and he is a man of war from his youth....

37 And David said, Jehovah, who rescued me from the hand of the lion, and from the hand of the bear, He will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine....

40 And he took his stick in his hand, and chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook,... and his sling was in his hand; and he approached the Philistine.

45 And David said to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to thee in the name of Jehovah of Armies, the God of the battle arrays of Israel whom thou hast reproached....

49 And David put forth his hand to the bag, and took thence a stone, and slung it, and smote the Philistine on his forehead, and the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the earth.

Mark 1:23-34.

23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 saying, Ah! What is there to us and to Thee, Jesus of Nazareth! Hast Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee, who Thou art, the Holy one of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Be speechless and come out of him.

26 And having convulsed him, the unclean spirit, having also cried with a great voice, came out of him.

27 And they were all astonished, so that they disputed among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new teaching is this? For with authority He orders even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him....

32 And evening having come, when the sun set, they brought to Him all who had an illness, and the demon-possessed....

34 And He cured many who had an illness of different diseases, and cast out many demons; and He let not the demons speak, because they knew Him.

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As truths from good have all power, so falsities from evil have no power at all; and as all in hell are in falsities from evil they have no power against truth and good.

Divine Providence 19.

[1] What is in good and at the same time in truth has reality; and from this it follows that what is evil and at the same time false has no reality. By having no reality is meant that it has no power and no spiritual life. Those who are in evil and at the same time in falsity-and all such are in hell-have indeed power among themselves; for one who is wicked can do evil, and does it in a thousand ways. Nevertheless, he can only do evil to the wicked from their evil, but cannot do the least evil to the good, except, as sometimes happens, by joining forces with their evil....

[2] Since the wicked have no power, the entire hell before the Lord is not only as nothing but is absolutely nothing with respect to power.... It is a remarkable thing, however, that the wicked all believe themselves to be powerful, and the good all believe themselves to be without power. This is because the wicked attribute all things to their own power, and thus to cunning and malice, and nothing to the Lord; while the good attribute nothing to their own prudence, but everything to the Lord who is Almighty.

“And they were all astonished, so that they disputed among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new teaching is this? For with authority He orders even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.” (Mark 1:27)

- **Introduction**

1. Three stories that show us something about seemingly powerful enemies and yet in each case those enemies are easily defeated. Each story emphasizes two main points, 1) that the Lord has all power and that with Him all things are possible!
2. And 2) that while evil at times seems to have power, it actually has none. Hell has no power!

- **Caleb, Joshua, and the Nephilim**

1. Caleb and Joshua were the only 2 of the 12 spies who went and explored the land of Canaan who brought back a good report and urged the people to go up and take the land because the Lord said He would give it to them. They practice the affirmative principle of trusting that what the Lord says is true simply because He said it! (AC 2568:4). As a result, they have confidence in the power of the Lord to deliver them.
2. However, the other 10 spies bring an evil report of the land because they cling to the negative principle and doubt what the Lord says, and instead rely on what their senses tell them. As a result, they see only the fortified cities, the big armies, and the Nephilim (the giants in the land), and therefore they are afraid and believe that their enemies have great power.

- **David and Goliath**

1. We see a similar thing in the story of David and Goliath. The children of Israel and even King Saul were afraid of Goliath. Why? Because he was a giant – 6 cubits and 1 span tall, or around 9’ and 8”! He was likely a descendant of Anak, the race of giants Joshua had driven out of Canaan to Gath.
2. The Anakim and the Nephilim were races of giants survived from fall of the Most Ancient Church and signify *“those who are in the strongest persuasion of their being more eminent and wise than others; and in the abstract sense they signify direful persuasions.... In the spiritual world...when those who are in a persuasion of their own superiority look at others, they see them as little and vile, and these then also appear such to themselves”* (AE 543:13). **I.E.** Grasshoppers in their sight – Goliath despising David and disdaining God.
3. The devils of hell like to do a similar thing. In their arrogance and conceit, they puff themselves up to make themselves look big and strong, and try to persuade us that we are small and weak and that not even God could help us. **I.E.** Animals’ hackles and snarling
4. However, David was not afraid of a lion or a bear or the giant Goliath, because he trusted in the power of the Lord to conquer his enemies. David signifies the complete power of the Lord’s Divine truth from good against all the falsities of evil (cf. AE 781:12). **I.E.** One stone slung at the forehead killed Goliath – a single simple truth can remove and conquer the greatest falsity. **I.E.** The man who commits to the truth of cleaving to his wife alone when tempted, can send hordes of the adulterous hells running.
5. Swedenborg witnessed the incredible power of the Lord’s truth over the hells many times in the spiritual world. We’re told, *“An angel who is in Divine truths from the Lord, although in body as weak as an infant, can nevertheless put to flight a troop of infernal spirits that look like Anakim and Nephilim, that is, like giants.... Likewise, men who are in Divine truths from the Lord have power against evils and falsities, and so they have against crowded ranks of devils”* (TCR 87:2). **I.E.** Antediluvians, believing they were as powerful as God *“were thrust down by a little child”* (AC 1271). Notice that it says that people who are in Divine truths from the Lord, also can have a similar power over hordes of devils that seek to assail them.

- **Jesus Casting Out Demons**

1. Notice in the story of the man possessed by the unclean spirit, the demon new who Jesus was and that He was God. This is why he was fearful, because in the spiritual world all the evil spirits, demons, and devils have witnessed that the power of the Lord's Divine Truth is absolute and that they are no match against it.
2. The people who saw this event were astonished and exclaimed, ***“What thing is this? What new teaching is this? For with authority He orders even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him”*** (Mark 1:27). They witnessed that the Lord had absolute authority over evil. This is critical for us to remember in times of doubt when we are struggling or afraid. ***With God all things are possible!***
3. We're told that the primary thing that is needed in order for the Lord to heal and help us is to ***“believe that the Lord is God Almighty”*** and acknowledge ***“His Divine omnipotence”*** (AE 815:3,5). The simple fact is that the Lord's truth coming from good has ***“all power,”*** but the evils and falsities of the hells have ***“no power”*** (HH 233, cf. AC 8206). So we should have confidence in Him.
4. The following teaching gives us another compelling image to remember when we are feeling scared and overwhelmed by the hells in times of temptation. ***“They who are in hell - all there being in falsities from evil - have no power whatever; and therefore thousands of them can be driven away, cast down, and dispersed by one angel of heaven, much as a mote in the air is driven away by the breath of the mouth”*** (AC 9327:3). **I.E.** The Divine truth of the Lord can literally blow them away!

- **Conclusion**

1. So, with all these wonderful teachings about the power of the Lord's Divine truth over hell, why do we still at times have our “hearts melt” with fear and feel afraid? Why do we let them fill us with a sense of hopelessness?
2. As we talked about with the Anakim and the giant Goliath, the power of the hells is based completely on illusion. The evil spirits and devils are masters at making themselves look big and strong, and us as insignificant and weak. They con us into believing that they have greater power than the Lord (cf. DP 19:2). So we have to remember how far from the facts this is.
3. Our final reading makes this point in even clear terms: ***“What is in good and at the same time in truth has reality; and from this it follows that what is evil and at the same time false has no reality. By having no reality is meant that it has no power”*** (DP 19:1).
4. They only have power when we give them the power, by believing their lies. **I.E.** When you are filled with rage at someone who hurt you, and think there is no way to get rid of the anger. But we are told that they reality is that they ***“cannot do the least evil to the good, except...by joining forces with their evil”*** (DP 19:1).
5. So, the secret is to remember to have confidence that the Divine truth of the Lord has all power, and be humble enough to realize like David that while we from ourselves have no power, with the Lord God Almighty fighting for us, we are assured victory over the hells every time.
6. It is true that we cannot save ourselves from our own power, and so the Lord reminds us, ***“With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible”*** (Mark 1:27). And He assures us when we are afraid just as He did His disciples when they doubted His power, by saying, ***“All authority is given to Me in heaven and on earth.... and behold, I am with you all the days, even to the consummation of the age. Amen.”*** (Matthew 28:18,20).