The Bulwark

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WHO IS THE REAL SUPERHERO?

"Spider-Man! Spider-Man! Does whatever a spider can! Spins a web, any size; catches thieves just like flies! Look out, here comes the Spider-Man" That song got etched into my brain as I sat in front of the tv watching the cartoon featuring Peter Parker, who morphed into Spider-Man to save humanity. Now, to be sure, I was watching with either a grandchild or one of the kids from the congregation. But then Spider-Man, Superman, Batman and a host of other "superheroes" went from comic books, cartoon shows to the "silver screen" amassing a whooping $32 billion in revenue for the Marvel Cinematic Universe over the past ten or so years.



Why are people drawn to movies of this ilk? Does anyone really know? To the untrained eye it seems as if one "borrows" from another. A simple outline; somebody/something in trouble, hence the need for a hero because there is always a villain of considerable strength standing in the way. But ultimately the hero is the victor, the villain is overcome and either destroyed or taken into custody. Being one who looks for correlation even in the most diverse places, there does seem to be a bit of resemblance to the big picture found in the pages of scripture; however, there is a huge difference. One is fantasy, the other is reality, seen unfolding over thousands of years.

In the first chapter of Ephesians, Paul notes in verse ten, *"the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth…"* Christ came to *"seek and save the lost"* to fulfill the promise that the Father had set forth time and time again in the Old Testament. Note what is seen Isaiah 53:2-4, For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, *"And like a root out of dry ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we would look at Him, Nor an appearance that we would take pleasure in Him. He was despised and abandoned by men, A man of great pain and familiar with sickness; And like one from whom people hide their faces, He was despised, and we had no regard for Him. However, it was our sicknesses that He Himself bore, and our pains that He carried; Yet we ourselves assumed that He had been afflicted, struck down by God, and humiliated."* An unassuming, humble One who despite opposition put His life on the line for others. *"For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly."* (Romans 5:6) *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* (Romans 5:8)

Talk about a "superhero" in Christ there is so much more, and it is not a flight of fantasy; but a reality! *"When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display over them, having triumphed over them through Him."* (Colossians 2:15) *"Since then the children share in the flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil"* (Hebrews 2:14)

He bore the stroke for us. Look what Paul sets forth in Romans 8:37. *"But in all these things we overwhelming conquer through Him who loved us."* Mankind needs look no further than the word of God to find a true, lasting hero: Jesus, who is the Christ (wbe)