



Bethany Lutheran Church & Preschool  
5051 McCarty Road  
Saginaw, MI 48603  
[www.bethanysaginaw.com](http://www.bethanysaginaw.com)  
Phone: 989-793-9579

## Viewpoints

*Viewing life as Christ's cross-scarred hand points out the blessings he's overseeing.*

### Behind the Bloody Attack ~ May 24, 2013

Recently in a London suburb, a British soldier was murdered by Muslim extremists. Two terrorists hacked the soldier to death. They even posed for photographs while standing over the beheaded victim as if he was a trophy. "Sickening" and "deluded" condemned one news outlet.

Unfortunately, such sickening and deluded acts are not new. Some 3,000 years ago Israel was engaged in battle against the Philistines on Mount Gilboa, when Israel's first king died. When the Philistines went around stripping the dead, they found King Saul. So his lifeless body became trophies. The Philistines put Saul's head on display in the temple of Dagon. The rest of his body became a morbid billboard fastened to a wall in the fortified city of Beth Shan. And his stripped-off armor was exhibited in the temple of the Ashtoreths so pagan worshippers could gloat as they unrobed for their ritualistic prostitution-worship.

Can you sense how terror hacked away at the faith of Israel? The death of their king was only the beginning. Then the vulgarity of showcasing his body. And the licentious rejoicing. And finally, the pagans praising their idols for the victory.

If you were an Israelite who witnessed all this, would not the light waves penetrating your cornea, the sounds striking your tympanic membrane, the bitter taste touching your chemoreceptor cells and the dull ache emanating from your bones seemingly testify to a devastating weakness in the LORD your God?

But remember that eyes, ears, taste and touch are seriously inadequate in understanding our LORD and his ways. Our unaided cerebrum and cerebellum cannot connect with the holy Creator or detect the glorious design of his schematics. Our earthly senses are easily overwhelmed and we fail to see God's work working behind-the-scenes. Yes, Saul was killed by the Philistines who then carved up his body in wicked celebration. But the Bible makes it stunningly clear: "Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD... so the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse" (1 Ch 10:13-14).

You just read three important truths. 1) The LORD was in control the whole time. 2) The LORD used evil people and wicked ways to achieve his holy purposes. 3) The LORD advanced his plans: David became king.

Have your plans been beheaded by failure? Has your world been stripped of its armor by out-of-control events? Has your faith been shaken to the core, causing you to question your LORD's power? Fight back by opening your Bible and arming yourself with God's truth.

The truth is that God has already won against all the forces of evil. Hell unleashed its fury and all the forces of wickedness tagged Jesus to the tree. Satan thought he had a trophy in the dead body of Jesus Christ. And indeed, Jesus' body is a trophy. But not for Satan, because Jesus rose from the dead.

Jesus' living body is indeed on display... reigning on the throne in God's eternal kingdom! What a welcome sight awaiting you and me and all who believe in Jesus! Jesus rose from the dead, and the spoils of his victory mean that we who believe are declared blameless, pure and faithful. The glorified scars in his hands signal our security. His loving smile radiates the certainty that all tragedies in life are twisted and turned to serve God's purposes.

From Dagon's temple a few millennia ago, to the streets of London today, Satan deploys sickening and deluded atrocities in order to terrorize our faith. But the same LORD who ruled while the Philistines carved up Saul's body, is the same LORD who's working behind the scenes of the bloodied street in London. To the wicked, the LORD masks himself. But to us who believe, the LORD reveals himself through his faithful promises, enabling us to see his blameless and perfect control. "[O Lord], to the faithful you show yourself faithful, to the blameless you show yourself blameless, to the pure you show yourself pure, but to the crooked you show yourself shrewd" (Psalm 18:25-26).

The murder in London is indeed a sickening and deluded event, in which the terrorist rejoices; from which the unbeliever shudders in fear; by which the LORD reminds us to run to his promises and see behind the bloody attack. ✚

*Source Material* (Links may become inactive over time.)

[Bloody attack brings terror to capital's streets](#) @ the independent.com

To become a recipient of Viewpoints, please email [mike.nitz@bethanysaginaw.com](mailto:mike.nitz@bethanysaginaw.com) and simply type the phrase "VP please" in the subject line. Or if you wish to no longer receive Viewpoints, type the phrase "discontinue VP" in the subject line. Thanks.

*Blessings to you and your loved ones, Pastor Mike Nitz*

