



Are Christians God's Superhero-Avengers?

Obadiah 1:21: (NASB) *The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion to judge the mountain of Esau, and the kingdom will be the LORD's.*



The Avengers movie has been a box office sensation, breaking all kinds of records. Why? Good movie, good story, good special effects and (wait for it!) superheroes...lots of superheroes! We all love looking up to those who will stand for what's right and save the world. We all especially love the fact that these heroes, while super, are flawed as well and they still fight for what is right! Does God's plan for humanity include such heroes? Who would they be? What would they do? Would they - could they - save the world? Stay with us!

Every superhero has a world-threatening dilemma - what is ours?

There must be some super problem that needs to be solved!

Genesis 2:15-17: (NASB) ¹⁵Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. ¹⁶The LORD God commanded the man, saying, From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; ¹⁷but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.

Rules and regulations were put in place, along with major consequences if the rules weren't followed.

 **Made to be ruled, Avengers Movie Trailer**

- *You were made to be ruled. In the end it will be every man for himself...*

The consequence of disobedience:

Genesis 3:22-24: (NASB) ²²Then the LORD God said, Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever ²³therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

Sin drove man out of the perfect environment.

The ripple effect of that disobedience:

Romans 3:23: (NASB) *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...*

The whole world sins and falls short of the glory of God - that's a pretty supersized dilemma. Who will fight against such a dramatic evil that has permeated all of mankind?

There is a "superhero" response to the terminal effects of sin:

Isaiah 6:8: (NASB) ⁸Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? Then I said, Here am I. Send me!

Romans 6:23: (NASB) *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The expansion of the call to fight sin went out:

Acts 15:14: (NASB) *Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name.*



Romans 8:18-21: (NASB) ¹⁸For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

The whole creation has the ability to be freed through the acts resulting from the calling of the true church - that gives us a sense that some heroic acts must be coming.



God's Superheroes - Old Testament: Moses parts the Red Sea

Exodus 14:21: And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

What "call" do God's heroes answer?



God's Superheroes - Old Testament: Sampson

Judges 16:28-30: (NASB) ²⁸Then Samson called to the LORD and said, O Lord GOD, please remember me and please strengthen me just this time, O God, that I may at once be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. ²⁹Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and braced himself against them, the one with his right hand and the other with his left. ³⁰And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines! And he bent with all his might so that the house fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he killed in his life.



There was an idea, Avengers Movie Trailer

- There was an idea to bring together a group of remarkable people, so when we needed them they could fight the battles that we never could - what are you prepared to do?

There was a great redemption work declared by God through Jesus!

Hebrews 2:9: (KJV) But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.



There is no throne, Avengers Movie Trailer (Ironman talking to the bad guy)

- What have I to fear?
- The Avengers, it's what we call ourselves. It's kinda like a team - earth's mightiest heroes type thing.
- Yes, I've met them.
- It takes us a while to get any traction... When they come and they will, they'll come for you!
- I have an army!
- We have a Hulk!
- I have a throne.



- *You are missing the point - there's no throne - there is no version of this where you come out on top...*

This reminds us of Satan, with all of his fallen angels to take over the world. There is no place of permanent rule for him, even with his so called army.

Superheroes always have to live differently than others. The call of God's heroes was to a life contradictory to the world around them:

1 Peter 2:7-12: (ASV) ⁷For you therefore that believe is the preciousness: but for such as disbelieve, the stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner; ⁸and, a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; for they stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

Jesus is the key to the whole plan of God, but Israel rejected him. What we see as valuable is rejected.

⁹But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:

We are responsible to show God's goodness and to reveal the light! We must live that which we profess!

¹⁰who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. ¹¹Beloved, I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; ¹²having your behavior seemly among the Gentiles; that, wherein they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

This is a description of God's earthly heroes.

Our mission defined:

2 Corinthians 5:17-20: (ASV) ¹⁷Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. ¹⁸But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. ²⁰We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.

The world is stuck in sin, but through this New Creation - God's heroes - He is reconciling the world back to Himself.

What powers are associated with the call to Biblical Heroes?



God's Superheroes - Old Testament: Elijah's fiery chariot

2 Kings 2:11: And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Thought I didn't qualify, Avengers Movie Trailer

- *It's called the Avengers' Initiative.*
- *I thought I didn't qualify - apparently I'm "volatile, self-obsessed and don't play well with others."*



Who "qualifies" for this privilege as a hero of God?

1 Corinthians 6:9-11: (ASV) ⁹Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.

"Super" powers in the past:

Acts 5:12-16: (NASB) ¹²At the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico. ¹³But none of the rest dared to associate with them; however, the people held them in high esteem. ¹⁴And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number, ¹⁵to such an extent that they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on any one of them. ¹⁶Also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all being healed.

"Super" powers in the present: The Spirit as "teacher":

John 14:26: (KJV) But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The spirit as "helper":

Romans 8:26: (KJV) Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

The power of prayer:

James 5:16: (NASB) Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

"Super" powers in the future: Judges of Israel and the world

1 Corinthians 6:2: (NKJV) Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?

Matthew 19:28: (NKJV) in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Daniel 7:27: (NIV) the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints. (the true called-out ones)

We are in a development stage to prepare for these future powers.

What is the cost of being a Biblical Hero?

Romans 12:1-2: (Rotherham) ¹I beseech you therefore, brethren, through the compassions of God, to present your bodies a living, holy sacrifice, unto God acceptable,—your rational divine service; ²And be not configuring yourselves unto this age, but be transforming yourselves by the renewing of your mind, to the end ye may be proving what is the thing willed by God—the good and acceptable and perfect.

Isn't this the model that most superheroes follow? Dedicated to a higher cause greater than themselves - inevitably needing to sacrifice their personal life - always focusing on their personal transformation for the sake of right...



As with all superheroes, there is always the need to choose your path:

Luke 14:25-33: (NIV) ²⁵Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: ²⁶If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple.

Obviously, we are told to love our neighbor as ourselves, so this text is referring to our new priorities...

²⁷And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? ²⁹For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, ³⁰saying, This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.

To build the life of a hero of God, we must think it through first, lest we find ourselves half-way with no ability to finish...

³¹Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? ³²If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. ³³In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

We MUST, as God's heroes, be "all in" because the battle that we face is ominous...

Time, Avengers Movie Trailer

- The world has changed. We are hopelessly outgunned. Mr. Stark, it's time.

What kind of dedication does it take when we are "hopelessly outgunned?"

Philippians 1:21: (KJV) For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Revelation 2:10: (KJV) Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Romans 8:13: (KJV) For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Romans 14:8: (KJV) For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

Do God's "Superheroes" have the same type of challenges as fictional heroes?

..How does the end of the world sound? That is quite a challenge!

Matthew 24:21-22: (NASB) ²¹For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. ²²Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.



God's Superheroes - Old Testament: David's mighty men

- Ishbaal put 300 to death at one time with his spear. 1 Chronicles 11:11



- The Philistines came together in Lehi to attack the Israelites. While everyone else fled, Shammah stood his ground and repelled Philistine attackers by himself. 2 Samuel 23:11-12

So, the call to heroism simply costs all that we have:

Mark 8:34: (NRSV) *He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.*

You call on lost creatures, Avengers Movie Trailer

- (Loki) *How desperate are you...you call on such lost creatures to defend you.*
- (Nick Fury) *How desperate am I? You threaten my world with war. You steal a force you can't hope to control. You talk about peace and you kill because it's fun. You have made me very desperate. You might not be glad that you did.*

Loki's sole objective is to rule the world, just like Satan.

1 Corinthians 1:26-29: (NRSV) ²⁶*Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no one might boast in the presence of God.*

The lowly are called to plainly reveal that their spiritual status is of God and not of self. Humility is key!

But even with this humility in place, there is no room for a hero to let up during the fight:

1 Corinthians 9:24-27: (NASB) ²⁴*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. ²⁵Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; ²⁷but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.*

The battle advantage that God's heroes have is His care for us in whatever circumstance we find ourselves in, as long as we are focused on fighting His battle!

Romans 8:35-39: (NRSV) ³⁵*Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered. ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

What is the end result of the battles of God's heroes?

First of all, what does God want out of this whole thing? True salvation!

1 Timothy 2:3-6: (NRSV) ³*This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge (full disclosure and understanding) of the truth. ⁵For there is one God; there is also one mediator (one who sits between two parties who are at odds) between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, ⁶who gave himself a ransom for all--this was attested at the right time.*



...and What God wants, God gets!

Romans 8:18-21: (NASB) ¹⁸For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

(A caller added Ephesians 6. This subject was discussed in detail on a previous Christian Questions program - please refer to: **Are you Armed for Battle? January 24, 2010.**)

So, the plan of God includes ALL men:

Daniel 2:44: (ASV) *And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*

What role will God's heroes play in this?

Revelation 2:26-29: (NASB) ²⁶He who overcomes, and he who keeps my deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; ²⁷and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from my Father; ²⁸and I will give him the morning star. ²⁹He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

The "overcomers" are given authority to rule others but under Christ.

Who will this rule be under?

Daniel 7:13-14: (ASV) ¹³I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. ¹⁴And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

And what will this rule - this kingdom - produce?

Micah 4:1-5: (KJV) ¹But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. ²And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ³And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. ⁴But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it. ⁵For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

God is developing His true church to be His "superheroes" in setting up His everlasting kingdom. Scripturally we have evidence that the followers of Christ are given the responsibility to be faithful unto death in order to be given a crown of life. They will help the world reconcile back to God in His kingdom here on earth. The Avengers movie was great, but God's plan is so much better!



**So are Christians God's Superhero-Avengers?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions,
Think about it...!**



And now even more to think about...
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One of the most powerful lines in the movie was when Shield Agent Coulson told Loki that he can never succeed, and when Loki asked why, in spite of the army he was bringing, agent Coulson just said, "because you have no convictions."

THE ARMOR OF GOD AND THE AVENGERS - There are some loose connections with Armor of God:0

- Iron man's armor - prominently his breastplate of righteousness
- Captain America's shield - like our shield of faith
- Thor's hammer - like the sword of truth
- Hawkeye turned against Avengers - Satan's arrows and darts. Satan's most dangerous weapon is to turn brethren against each other.
- The villain, Loki, betrays his brother Thor and his father Odin, much like Lucifer betrayed the Logos and God.

More on the inheritance of the True Church:

This inheritance includes promises:

Hebrews 6:9-12: (ASV) ⁹But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak: ¹⁰for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and the love which ye showed toward his name, in that ye ministered unto the saints, and still do minister. ¹¹And we desire that each one of you may show the same diligence unto the fulness of hope even to the end: ¹²that ye be not sluggish, but imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

2 Peter 1:2-4: (NRSV) ²May grace and peace be yours in abundance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants of the divine nature.

This inheritance includes reigning with Jesus:

2 Timothy 2:10-13: (NRSV) ¹⁰Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. ¹¹The saying is sure: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; ¹²if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny us; ¹³if we are faithless, he remains faithful— for he cannot deny himself.

Revelation 3:21: (NRSV) *To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.*

This inheritance is comprehensive!

Revelation 21:5-7: (ASV) ⁵And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true. ⁶And he said unto me, They are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto



him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. ⁷He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

1 Corinthians 2:9-10: (NRSV) ⁹*But, as it is written, What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him - ¹⁰these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.*