

ALTHOUGH HE MAKE IT NOT TO GROW

2 SAMUEL 23:2 – 24:25

^^^^^^

~ Our Spiritual Safari overall Scriptural perspectives from the double books of the prophet Samuel present as extremely harsh and even repulsive to many people. I recognize my style and theology is not popular. The proper, correct and complete teaching of Holy Writ is neither accepted nor tolerated in contemporary religious society. Any theology incorporating the doctrine of the total and complete depravation of mankind according to Scripture is typically met with incredulity, resistance, insults and vile attempts to shame it into silence. Well, omit this one ingredient from Bible teaching or preaching and you have a recipe for making big merchandise of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our thirtieth and final safari report from Samuel completes a log of an estimated ninety thousand words in this commentary. In this report, we come to David's final words and a list of his mighty men – thirty-seven in all. This could be labeled David's autobiography and, interestingly, Uriah the Hittite is the last person mentioned – and he receives a verse all to himself. I don't know about you dear readers but, to me, that is simply remarkable.

David was a son of Jesse – a peasant – and David was lifted up and chosen by God as king over His Chosen people, the nation Israel. Our last report concluded by informing us David was the anointed of the God of Jacob. That is also remarkable; because God took a man who was ordinary and, through all of the mistakes David made in his life, God never forsook him; on the contrary, God molded David into a mature saint of God who could pen such genius literature as the Psalms; and we read one of them in the previous chapter. I do not know about you, but God has had to put up with a whole bunch of shenanigans from *ME*. I am guessing God has put up with some questionable deeds from you, also? Well, we can both thank God He hasn't thrown us overboard, either; or will never abandon us. Jesus saith, "*he who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.*"

I am a musician, but I have never been too interested in the tune or melody; although they are important. The thing of most importance to me are the *WORDS!* Well, when we get to the Book of Psalms, I won't be singing, because I can't carry a tune to save my life – but we will surely examine every word in depth. Quite frankly, most modern Christian music is absolutely disgraceful. It's filled with a saccharin sweetness that only gives one a headache. There is remarkably little religious music that is not utterly foreign to the teaching of the Word of God and contradicted sharply by Scripture. So, let's continue with the conclusion of the second Book of Samuel...

XXIII

2 The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.

3 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

4 And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.

5 Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

~ My estimation is there are very few Christians who even know this passage exists. A correct application of this Scriptural principle is literally avoided like the plague in the church. The Spirit of God came upon David; and that was how the Psalms were produced, friends. In fact, the entire Old Testament was written by men who were carried along by the Spirit of God. Modern-day governmental decisions – irrespective of party affiliation – are blatantly and obviously not made with a reverent fear of the Lord in mind. Decisions are only made in fear of a voting base. No effort is made to please the True and Living God in our society or leadership. Let's not kid ourselves. The only effort being made today is to please the constituency –

mainly the rich man; and the only matter of importance or measurable mark of success lies in being elected – at any and all cost.

Our American society, as a whole, was offered a complete lie labeled democracy; and we bought it hook, line and sinker. The last fifty years of leadership in this country have been a total collapse of ethics and abject failure of any semblance of decency, without question. God says that's what we deserve for electing criminal politicians and believing laughably unrealistic misrepresentations of the truth; and, my friends, it's exactly what we have received, and are presently receiving. I am pessimistic there is any hope of finding men from here forward who will choose to rule politics in the fear of God. I could be wrong – but – I don't think so. Corruption is our business model. Politics, ethics, technology, science and education - and even man's morality - will accept nothing less than affirming and worshiping said business plan.

Verse five brings one of the most remarkable statements David uttered during his lifetime. You will recall we considered God's covenant with David in the seventh chapter of this book of second Samuel. God promised to bring One in the line of David and that One was the same One promised to Eve in the Garden of Eden; the same One promised to Abraham; the same One in the covenant Who was renewed to Isaac and Jacob; the same One that Moses and Joshua spoke of – Christ Jesus; and now, we have David making an awe-inspiring statement. David acknowledges his house is not worthy of God.

You and I are neither selected for nor do we receive salvation based on any goodness or merit in us – because we don't have any. God does not choose us based on blood line, affiliations or heritage. If David had received what he deserved, God would not have made a covenant with him, because David deserved death for the murder of Uriah. In spite of that, God has made an everlasting covenant with David's family line and humanity, in general, in John chapter three verse sixteen. God made a promise without us asking or even suggesting it – because we could never think of this concept. We should hang on to that sweet truth tightly, my beloved. God says we can take it or leave it – do you take it? I do; and I rest upon it. We should all bow down and thank God we can depend on Him; even when He

cannot depend on us. That's what David said his salvation was. Do you honestly *DESIRE* your salvation? It should be our desire – although, for David, God made it not to grow. Turn all of that over in your mind a few times and see what you come up with. Selah....

6 But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands:

7 But the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place.

8 These be the names of the mighty men whom David had: The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains; the same was Adino the Eznite: he lift up his spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.

~ Well, the following list of names is a good exercise in pronunciation of Hebrew names; and also serves as a compact catalogue of David's mightiest men. These are the ones who came to David when he was first exiled by King Saul, during the time David was being "hunted like a partridge" and as a "pelican in the wilderness" – hiding in the caves and dens of the earth, you will recall. Three of these men are the ones who slipped away risking death and brought David water back from the well at Bethlehem when he spoke of desiring that water.

However, notice David didn't give a command for anyone to go get the water. These men joined David when they were in distress, in debt and discontented; and cruelly persecuted and oppressed by Saul. All of them were deeply bitter in soul; and *THAT* is the only way *YOU* or anyone else will ever come to Christ, friends. These men desired to go get the water for David. Only when one recognizes they are dismayed, disappointed, disillusioned, discouraged, disadvantaged, disenfranchised, disdained and disturbed – will they accept Christ as their Savior and desire to serve Him. I know that's not popular teaching; but that's too bad, because this is what God says, my beloved. Many men have broken through enemy lines to take the Gospel – the "water of Bethlehem" – to the entire world. Many pioneer

missionaries have come before me and paved the way. I'm not naming names, because there are too many to mention – and I know they aren't interested in recognition anyways; but they've been breaking through and getting out the water of the Word of God ever since Paul the apostle.

These things are not my opinion, my beloved – it's not my personal Bible theory, and it's not my religious philosophy – this is what the Word of God teaches. If you are not at the point where you are able to accept this as truth, then you haven't been saved. Are you discontented with your life? If you're living the good life and have no problems; and if you're the life of the party – then I don't have a message for you. I'm sure those people stopped reading a LONG time ago to get back to living a lie. But, if you are hurting in your soul and realize you need to be - and want to be - saved unto fellowship with God and to a place of fruit bearing for the Lord, then here is the truth. Do you want that daunting guilt complex removed from your thinking and to discover satisfaction of life? If you do – you'll have to come to the Lord Jesus Christ. These men who came to David were outstanding men who did many wonderful things. This is their record....

9 And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away:

10 He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil.

11 And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles: and the people fled from the Philistines.

12 But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and the LORD wrought a great victory.

13 And three of the thirty chief went down, and came to David in the harvest time unto the cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines pitched in the valley of Rephaim.

14 And David was then in an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem.

15 And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!

16 And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD.

17 And he said, Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.

18 And Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred, and slew them, and had the name among three.

19 Was he not most honourable of three? therefore he was their captain: howbeit he attained not unto the first three.

20 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lionlike men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow:

21 And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear.

22 These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men.

23 He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three. And David set him over his guard.

24 Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem,

25 Shammah the Harodite, Erika the Harodite,

26 Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite,

27 Abiezer the Anethothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite,

28 Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite,

29 Heleb the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, Ittai the son of Ribai out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin,

30 Benaiah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash,

31 Abialbon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite,

32 Eliahba the Shaalbonite, of the sons of Jashen, Jonathan,

33 Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite,

34 Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, EIAM the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,

35 Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite,

36 Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite,

37 Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, armourbearer to Joab the son of Zeruiah,

38 Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite,

39 Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all.

XXIV

1 And again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.

~ This is the record of yet another sin of David. Most Bible teachers don't seem to care to label this sin. However, what this boils down to is David lapses in faith in the Lord. In the beginning, God told David to number the people, you will remember. That was done to encourage him and strengthen him by letting him know there was a massive army behind him. Now, David is sinning by presumptively numbering his people to reinforce his pride, amongst other motives; because he is an old king who should have known God had laid the foundation, and David should have rested and overcome the enemy by faith. There was no need to number these people.

See, faith isn't a gamble, and it doesn't come to us by chance; in fact, it's not even an "I hope so" sort of thing. Faith is as sure as sunshine. God never asked you to believe something that isn't true or that is not believable. Our foundation is a Rock – the Lord Jesus Christ – and we are to call on Him and rest on *HIM!* Faith is not a leap in the darkness of outer space; however, there is a time we must step out in faith and realize we cannot survive this life's problems by our own effort – or by the size of our army.

Tragically, the modern church organization as a whole refuses to truly follow Scripture and trust God; because doing so does not attract the affluent crowd, friends. So, they play a numbers game and report convoluted weekly quotas of converts. They attempt to draw the crowd by establishing a set of rules that reinforce most people's general piety concerning their already well-established self-view of their life, which is naturally a favorable assessment. Certain passages from the Bible are manipulated and isolated to form a group philosophy that actually hinges entirely on a gimmick demanding full their full time and attention. Because that type of program appeals to emotion, sensationalism and selfie-ness, multitudes become enslaved to it. Spiritual victories are unheard of in their congregational meetings – because they have neither spirituality nor victories. The only benefits they can perceive from God are temporal, physical and material things; they haven't an inkling of a clue in discerning

the difference. They highlight how much money they have accumulated in the treasury, how many people they baptized last week, and how many members they enrolled this week. They may even focus on those who need various chores performed for them by God, usually a healing demand or crises resolution. People consider it a victory if the numbers and emotional appeal both look super-glossy-fantastic on paper. What fools they are....

2 For the king said to Joab the captain of the host, which was with him, Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, and number ye the people, that I may know the number of the people.

3 And Joab said unto the king, Now the LORD thy God add unto the people, how many soever they be, an hundredfold, and that the eyes of my lord the king may see it: but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?

4 Notwithstanding the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host. And Joab and the captains of the host went out from the presence of the king, to number the people of Israel.

5 And they passed over Jordan, and pitched in Aroer, on the right side of the city that lieth in the midst of the river of Gad, and toward Jazer:

6 Then they came to Gilead, and to the land of Tahtimhodshi; and they came to Danjaan, and about to Zidon,

7 And came to the strong hold of Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites, and of the Canaanites: and they went out to the south of Judah, even to Beersheba.

8 So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.

9 And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.

10 And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

11 For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,

12 Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.

13 So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.

14 And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.

15 So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men.

16 And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite.

17 And David spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.

18 And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite.

19 And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded.

20 And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground.

21 And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the threshingfloor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people.

22 And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, here be oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood.

23 All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept thee.

24 And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

25 And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

~ Our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God closes the historical double book of Samuel on the note that David *DID* know how to trust God. David's faith failed at times – that's true – but underneath that failure was a faith that never failed. David sinned and made errors in judgment, but he always trusted God – even in severe chastisement. God gave David a choice of corrections and David didn't choose any one of them. All David said to God was that he didn't want to fall into the hands of a man. Honestly, that's the one thing I pray for very definitely in this Spiritual Safari: is that I am never placed in a position where I become

subject to a man or men. So far, God has brought me through when there was absolutely *NO WAY* for this rinky-dink little Bible teaching to continue. I have great pity for some men in the ministry today who are subject to all sorts of differing opinions. David only wanted to fall into the hands of God. It's a blessing to me to see David doing just that.

The pestilence came, but David knew everything would be alright, even in the midst of this serious chastisement. My friend, the Lord will chasten those He loves, but there is tenderness in it all. There is also a blessing and a comfort in proper discipline. God alone can wipe away our tears, bind up the broken-hearted and heal the wounds in our soul. The doctor might be able to sew us up after an accident; but the emotional accidents of life have only One Physician who can treat them competently – our Great Physician – the Lord Jesus Christ.

On another note, there are people who say we shouldn't mention finances in the Lord's work today; and I'll admit there is an over-emphasis on money in the church. However, this man Araunah offered to give David the entire threshing floor, but David would not accept it as a gift. The threshing floor is where the Mosque of Omar stands today, by the way; and it's where the temple of Solomon once stood. Of course, Solomon's temple is really David's temple because he paid for the land – but that's another story. The point is: David refused to make an offering to God that had not cost him something.

May I say this kindly? – God have mercy on everyone who is capable of regularly supporting this ministry financially but does not. You should be paying your way, friends! I pay my way to my teachers. Do you wonder why God isn't honoring you or blessing you? It's no big mystery. If you are reading these reports but have no compelling intention to support this ministry, then this teaching is seed falling on rocky ground – and the rocky ground is *YOUR HEART!* Trust me; I know God's people simply refuse to give money to support sound doctrine. They'll send money to puppet front corrupt governments who say they're feeding poor orphans – and they'll send money to save stray cats in the Aleutian Islands – but support sound teaching? – *NO WAY!* That leads to teachers charging money for their teaching. Well, I'm sure I am going to be highly criticized for this paragraph

– but the critics are the same crowd who never gave one thin dime anyways. Anyways, David would not offer anything that had not cost him something – and, to that, I say hallelujah! Alright, that concludes safari commentary on First and Second Samuel and, if the Lord provides, our next report will commence the Book of First Kings – and I hope you’ll be reading along with us ~