

PUT TO DEATH IN THE DAYS OF THE HARVEST

2 SAMUEL 21:1 – 23:1

^^^^^^

~ These United States of America is a great nation. We enjoy freedoms the rest of the world envies, and our typical standard of living borders on luxurious, compared to most of the rest of the world. We also have some real problems; and most people view those problems as either economic or political. Some might enter race as the leading American problem in more recent history. However, the issues we face are none of those. Our problem is moral degeneration. Period. Full stop. The nineteenth century French philosopher and historian Alexis de Tocqueville made the following statement after visiting the United States: *".... I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and in her ample rivers, but it was not there; in the fertile fields and the boundless prairies, but it was not there; in her rich mines and vast world commerce, it was not there, either. It was not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with the righteousness of Christ did I understand the secrets of American genius and power. America is great because she is good. If America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great!"*

Sadly, friends, the "ceases to be good" ship has sailed - a *LONG* time ago. Our pulpits are *NOT* "aflame with the righteousness of Christ" any longer. Most are aflame with self-righteousness. Americans particularly are as immoral in the world as an immoral people can possibly become. Pride, oppression of the poor, deception, misinformation, false religions – are all business as usual. The facts prove this: six out of ten marriages end in divorce; abortion is responsible for more deaths alone than the Nazi holocaust, Viet Nam, the genocide of Cambodia and World War II combined. The pornography industry rakes in billions of dollars annually and most of that is used to feed organized crime families. The victimization of children in sexually related violence, drug and alcohol abuse and gambling addiction has escalated to proportions that we do not want to acknowledge. Prescription drug abuse – meaning legalized substance abuse and addiction – is at epidemic proportions and at alarming levels amongst middle-aged people. The murder rate is somewhere around one every

2 SAMUEL 21:1 – 23:1

^^^^^^

minute or two. It would be impossible to call this a Christian or “righteous” nation, by any stretch of an imagination. The problem is *GROSS* immorality; make no mistake about it. This nation is in desperate need of a spiritual revival. If you are reading this report, I trust you will remember this nation – and *ALL* nations – in prayer today. We don’t pray for the world, but we do pray for those who are in the world who are in Christ Jesus.

As we begin this leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God, we come to a period of famine in Israel; and the reason God gives for said famine seems very strange to me, indeed. However, there is a remarkable spiritual lesson for us to learn in this report. Pray for wisdom, judgment and discernment. You will remember from our study in the Book of Joshua, the Gibeonites had been judged unto destruction by God; but they deceived Joshua, and Joshua unwittingly formed a treatise with them. Well, King Saul had ignored said treatise and killed some of them, and that which Saul had sown was still growing in his family, and the entire nation was being affected by it....

XXI

1 Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.

2 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.)

3 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the LORD?

4 And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you.

5 And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel,

6 Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, whom the LORD did choose. And the king said, I will give them.

7 But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the LORD'S oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.

~ This is a tremendous section of Scripture. In the “uncivilized” day in which we are studying, a treatise with God’s people was inviolate, because His Word, spoken through His chosen people Israel, was His honor. Well, Saul violated the treatise Joshua had made with the Gibeonites; and now, David is required to reach out and attempt to make amends for said violation; and he succeeded. We need to make a very definite note that the Lord didn’t forget what Saul had done by breaking Joshua’s promise to the Gibeonites. As God’s children, we’re not going to get by renegeing on our word to others. My advice is: think before you speak. Today, we sit down at a conference table and sign treatise that are laughable because no one intends to respect the contract. The average person today is right being cynical and critical in regard to the way international politicians interact because those are the only logical and reasonable conclusions to the lies, greed and utter foolishness demonstrated by world and community leaders.

So, the judgment handed down for Israel was three years famine. In our age of grace, it cannot be said that any particular nation is chosen of God. Israel is scattered across the globe, and the Lord is calling out a people of this world to His Name from all tribes and tongues and nations. Even so, God *does* deal with and judge nations collectively. God holds entire nations responsible for atrocities in many cases, and it doesn’t make any difference what nation we’re naming, either. God has judged Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Greece, Rome; and God will have no compunction judging America. My opinion is that America is in the process of dissolution as a nation. We have

all the evidence of God's final judgment upon us as outlined at the beginning of this report.

Since World War II, America has made every attempt to be a great peace-making nation. The problem is: we have also accepted abject sin in our society. Because Christ is the only peace available to mankind, and He hates our sins, America does not have peace today. After WWII, we plunged headfirst into the shallow end of a thoroughly perverted lifestyle. The result is: we haven't had peace or abstinence from war somewhere on the face of this earth ever since. Man is talking about peace today more than we ever have, but there is no peace; and there is not going to be peace, my friends. Because God said explicitly "*there is no peace for the wicked.*"

There are other indications of our national moral decline, unavoidable and impending judgment, and final abrogation. A few examples are: we have neither great statesmen nor outstanding executive leadership by any party on any level whatsoever. I recognize *all* politicians believe they are intellectual and educated; and they all promise to solve the problems of the constituent. The reality is they are criminals engaging in pornographic and drug-related criminal activity. Actually, it's embarrassing and pitiful to see our nation with no leadership worthy of respect. Remember, God said He would give His people women to rule over them – and that wasn't a good thing, friends. Of course, the women in leadership today are beyond the pale in the category of worst of the worst; both in personal character and ambition.

America is fatally flawed and plagued with cults and ism's who operate under the guise of some liberal "Jesus" of whom there is no record. God has given America quite a shaking with the Middle East conflicts and through other attacks on our own land - from Pearl Harbor to the World Trade Center to terrorism perpetrated by American citizens. Now, I know there are people who believe they can explain all of that way socially, politically and scientifically, and they can certainly point the finger at other people and causes – but, my friends, this just happens to be the judgment of God – let's just get real. Lawlessness, fraud, murder, hate, homosexuality and other gross immorality; coupled with abjectly disgraceful self-centered living, are the standard of life in America. Well, this chapter reveals all of

these things were the reason for an unending warfare between Israel and the Philistines....

8 But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite:

9 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the LORD: and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest.

10 And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

11 And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.

12 And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabeshgilead, which had stolen them from the street of Bethshan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa:

13 And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.

14 And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. And after that God was intreated for the land.

15 Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: and David waxed faint.

16 And Ishbibenob, which was of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass in weight, he being girded with a new sword, thought to have slain David.

17 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David swore unto him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel.

18 And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob: then Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Saph, which was of the sons of the giant.

19 And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim, a Bethlehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.

20 And there was yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of great stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to the giant.

21 And when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea the brother of David slew him.

22 These four were born to the giant Goliath in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

~ When we considered the account of David and Goliath, I commented concerning David choosing five smooth stones - but how he only intended to use *ONE* stone on Goliath. I have heard this section of Scripture taught as '*we should always have a reserve when we fight our battles.*' Well, friends, that's a mistake of profound Biblical proportions! If you had spent any time with David tending sheep, you would have seen his slingshot employed many times. I think David could have landed a rock in a tree hollow that wasn't even big enough for a squirrel to crawl in. David didn't have a reserve of rocks; see, Goliath had four sons, and David had a rock for each one. Verse twenty-two makes that clear. David killed them all. I don't think

it happened all at the same time, but I can't be sure of that, either. What I do know is: at some point, David got at them; and now they're dead....

XXII

1 And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul:

~ We're going to bypass this chapter as David sings a song. Our safari doesn't sing, friends. You can rejoice in that. These are tremendous expressions of deliverance, and we will examine them closely in the Book of Psalms. I hope you'll read this chapter carefully; and that you have prayed for wisdom, judgment and discernment. David composed this song in his old age, and it appears written around the same time as Psalm eighteen and twenty-three. This chapter is our Old Testament version of the statement from Paul who said, "... He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of the Lord Jesus Christ!" If God has brought you up this moment, friends, He doesn't intend to let you down. Christ is the rock of our salvation, and we rest upon Him....

2 And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;

3 The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my Saviour; thou savest me from violence.

4 I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

5 When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid;

6 The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me;

7 In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.

8 Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth.

9 There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

10 He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet.

11 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind.

12 And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.

13 Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled.

14 The LORD thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice.

15 And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them.

16 And the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of the LORD, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.

17 He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters;

18 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me.

19 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.

20 He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

21 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

22 For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

23 For all his judgments were before me: and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them.

24 I was also upright before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity.

25 Therefore the LORD hath recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness in his eye sight.

26 With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright.

27 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unsavory.

28 And the afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down.

29 For thou art my lamp, O LORD: and the LORD will lighten my darkness.

30 For by thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall.

31 As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him.

32 For who is God, save the LORD? and who is a rock, save our God?

33 God is my strength and power: and he maketh my way perfect.

34 He maketh my feet like hinds' feet: and setteth me upon my high places.

35 He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

36 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great.

37 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; so that my feet did not slip.

38 I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again until I had consumed them.

39 And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: yea, they are fallen under my feet.

40 For thou hast girded me with strength to battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me.

41 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me.

42 They looked, but there was none to save; even unto the LORD, but he answered them not.

43 Then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth, I did stamp them as the mire of the street, and did spread them abroad.

44 Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people; thou hast kept me to be head of the heathen: a people which I knew not shall serve me.

45 Strangers shall submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me.

46 Strangers shall fade away, and they shall be afraid out of their close places.

47 The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation.

48 It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me,

49 And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man.

50 Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name.

51 He is the tower of salvation for his king: and sheweth mercy to his anointed, unto David, and to his seed for evermore.

XXIII

1 Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,

~ This leg of our safari has been rough. I recognize my teaching, style, method and manner isn't popular, friends. The so-called Spiritual Safari isn't going to be winning any popularity contests. I'm not going to be invited to speak to graduating classes at any seminaries. In this day in which we live, we have *NOTHING* in *ANY* man that would even remotely be considered genius in the way of writing. Everything is run by computer and, quite frankly, there's nothing new for me to say. My reports are just a regurgitation of profound truth. We label modernity a scientific age because we know how to add two plus two and conclude with four on a machine – although even that is being challenged and changed – but we don't produce anything original in terms of thought anymore. There are no profound original thinkers. The computer spits out tiresome conflict and

suggestions for how to disagree. It's absolutely frightening how monotonous life becomes when we leave God out. We'll study this subject ad nauseam in Isaiah.

David was rough and hot-headed in his youth; but God is gentle and calming. Serving God is going to create change in our life. David's love and association with the True and Living God has quieted him significantly at this point. David's fire has been stoked, friends; and he has now been changed into a very gracious and humble man. David said, "... *Thy gentleness hath made me great!*" We need to get a little bit closer to God before there is no more opportunity for us to do so. I'm not kidding.

The twenty-third Psalm was not written by an immature boy; it is not a protest by some sophomore college student who has no idea what life is about. It wasn't written by a middle-aged man with great ambitions to get to the top of business or politics, either. No, those Psalms are written by an old king looking back over a very long life of murder, adultery, family problems, civil war, personal willful disobedience to God in relation to how the Lord had moved so graciously in his life. The most wonderful thing David ever said was, "... *the Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want!*" What kind of a Shepherd do you have today? How are you making it out there in the world? Is it rough and difficult? Are you trying to expand your mind and broaden your horizons? Have all of your hopes and dreams come true exactly as you imagined they would? Why not engage in real intelligence and wisdom, and turn to a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ today? That can only be done one way. It's wonderful and worthwhile ~