

## **Bible Readings**

### **Old Testament Reading**

2 Samuel 21:1-22

#### **The Gibeonites Avenged**

**21** During the reign of David, there was a famine for three successive years; so, David sought the face of the LORD. The LORD said, "It is on account of Saul and his blood-stained house; it is because he put the Gibeonites to death."

<sup>2</sup>The king summoned the Gibeonites and spoke to them. (Now the Gibeonites were not a part of Israel but were survivors of the Amorites; the Israelites had sworn to spare them, but Saul in his zeal for Israel and Judah had tried to annihilate them.) <sup>3</sup>David asked the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? How shall I make atonement so that you will bless the LORD's inheritance?"

<sup>4</sup>The Gibeonites answered him, "We have no right to demand silver or gold from Saul or his family, nor do we have the right to put anyone in Israel to death."

"What do you want me to do for you?" David asked.

<sup>5</sup>They answered the king, "As for the man who destroyed us and plotted against us so that we have been decimated and have no place anywhere in Israel, <sup>6</sup>let seven of his male descendants be given to us to be killed and their bodies exposed before the LORD at Gibeah of Saul—the LORD's chosen one."

So, the king said, "I will give them to you."

<sup>7</sup>The king spared Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, because of the oath before the LORD between David and Jonathan son of Saul. <sup>8</sup>But the king took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons of Aiah's daughter Rizpah, whom she had borne to Saul, together with the

five sons of Saul's daughter Merab, whom she had borne to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite. <sup>9</sup> He handed them over to the Gibeonites, who killed them and exposed their bodies on a hill before the LORD. All seven of them fell together; they were put to death during the first days of the harvest, just as the barley harvest was beginning.

<sup>10</sup> Rizpah daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it out for herself on a rock. From the beginning of the harvest till the rain poured down from the heavens on the bodies, she did not let the birds touch them by day or the wild animals by night. <sup>11</sup> When David was told what Aiah's daughter Rizpah, Saul's concubine, had done, <sup>12</sup> he went and took the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan from the citizens of Jabesh Gilead. (They had stolen their bodies from the public square at Beth Shan, where the Philistines had hung them after they struck Saul down on Gilboa.) <sup>13</sup> David brought the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan from there, and the bones of those who had been killed and exposed were gathered up.

<sup>14</sup> They buried the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan in the tomb of Saul's father Kish, at Zela in Benjamin, and did everything the king commanded. After that, God answered prayer in behalf of the land.

### **Wars Against the Philistines**

<sup>15</sup> Once again there was a battle between the Philistines and Israel. David went down with his men to fight against the Philistines, and he became exhausted. <sup>16</sup> And Ishbi-Benob, one of the descendants of Rapha, whose bronze spearhead weighed three hundred shekels and who was armed with a new sword, said he would kill David. <sup>17</sup> But Abishai son of Zeruah came to David's rescue; he struck the Philistine down and killed him. Then David's men swore to him, saying, "Never again will you go out with us to battle, so that the lamp of Israel will not be extinguished."

<sup>18</sup> In the course of time, there was another battle with the Philistines, at Gob. At that time Sibbekai the Hushathite killed Saph, one of the descendants of Rapha.

<sup>19</sup> In another battle with the Philistines at Gob, Elhanan son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed the brother of Goliath the Gittite, who had a spear with a shaft like a weaver's rod.

<sup>20</sup> In still another battle, which took place at Gath, there was a huge man with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot—twenty-four in all. He also was descended from Rapha. <sup>21</sup> When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of Shimeah, David's brother, killed him.

<sup>22</sup> These four were descendants of Rapha in Gath, and they fell at the hands of David and his men.

## **New Testament Reading**

### **John 8:12-20**

<sup>12</sup> When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

<sup>13</sup> The Pharisees challenged him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid."

<sup>14</sup> Jesus answered, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going. <sup>15</sup> You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one. <sup>16</sup> But if I do judge, my decisions are true, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me. <sup>17</sup> In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is true. <sup>18</sup> I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me."

<sup>19</sup> Then they asked him, "Where is your father?"

"You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also." <sup>20</sup> He spoke these words while teaching in the temple courts near the place where the offerings were put. Yet no one seized him, because his hour had not yet come.

## Sermon

**The Lamp for the People (2 Samuel 21:1-22 & John 8:12-20)**

01-Nov-20

Please have your **Bibles opened to 2 Samuel chapter 21.**

There's an **outline** - if you want to take **notes**.

Let me **pray** before we begin...

Let's pray...

## Intro/Context

- **Last week** we saw **David** and his **team** deal **effectively** with a **rebellion**
- And we **emphasized** the importance of **unity** - and **working as a team** - remembering that **we are the body of Christ** - and we have the **common bond of Jesus**
- In this chapter - chapter **21** - **David** has a **couple of loose ends** to sort out

## Loose End #1 - Israel's broken promise to the Gibeonites (2 Samuel 21:1-14)

- The first loose end is the problem of a **famine** in **Israel** for **3 years**

### [PowerPoint 1-Famine]

- See v1
- **King David wonders if the **famine** having gone on for **3 years** might have a **spiritual reason** - so he prays to God**
- **God reveals** that during the time of King Saul's reign (perhaps about 30 years ago) - **King Saul had broken an ancient promise** that the **Israelites** had **made** some 400 years earlier - in Joshua's time
- In **Joshua chapter 9** - a tribe of people called the **Gibeonites** had **tricked Joshua and the Israelites** into making a promise never to harm them
- The **Gibeonites lied to the Israelites** and said they were from a faraway land - when in fact they lived nearby
- **Joshua & the Israelites** made a **promise (covenant)** not to harm the **Gibeonites** - they made this promise WITHOUT consulting God
- Later when **Joshua found out** the Gibeonites were **lying** - he couldn't go back on his promise - but he **made** the **Gibeonites** - Israel's **servants** - as woodcutters and water carriers

### [PowerPoint 2 -Famine caused by Saul]

- **King Saul** had blatantly disregarded this **ancient promise** and killed many of the **Gibeonites** - and God told David - this was the direct **cause** for the **three-year famine** in David's time
- **King David realizes** this is a very serious offence and in v3 - he **asks** the **Gibeonites** how he can make atonement - make amends for the harm done to the Gibeonites
- The **Gibeonites demand** that **7 male descendants of Saul** are **handed over** to them to be killed

- **David did not hand over** the most obvious descendant of Saul, that's **Mephibosheth**, Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson - because David had **promised Jonathan**, he would not harm any of his family (1 Sam 18:3) and David had also promised to take care of Mephibosheth (2 Sam 9:7)
- Interestingly - **5 of those men - handed over** - are sons of **Saul's daughter, Merab**.
- **Merab** was the daughter, **Saul had promised to give to David in marriage** - back in 1 Samuel 18:17-19 - but Saul went back on his word and gave Merab to another man (Adriel) in **marriage**. Instead, Saul gave David the younger daughter Michal. It's like the wrong Saul did to David is also being righted here
- The other 2 men handed over are **Saul's sons from his wife Rizpah** - they are Armoni and Mephibosheth [a different Mephibosheth]

### [PowerPoint 3-Exposed men]

- The **7 men** handed over - are **killed and exposed** on a hill
- Having the **men left exposed on the hill - achieved 2 things** - 1<sup>st</sup> it **showed God** that the **broken promise** had been **atoned for** - and 2<sup>nd</sup> it was a **deterrent** to all watching - showing them the **importance of keeping promises**
- This atonement stopped the **famine** - and the **rains come** - v11 -
- Meanwhile - the **mother of 2 of the men** - a woman named **Rizpah** - shows **incredible grief** for the men - she **spends each day shooing birds** from the men's exposed bodies - and **spends each night keeping wild animals away - until the rains come**

- When David sees her grief - he shows compassion - and takes the men's bodies away to be buried properly
- This also prompts David to tie up another loose end - the bodies of King Saul and his son Jonathan - have never had a proper burial - so David takes their bones and buries them in Saul's father, Kish's, tomb
- And so, God answered David's prayers - v14

### [PowerPoint 4-Application]

#### Application

- It is worth us asking God to reveal to us anything in our hearts that needs to be corrected - as David did here when he saw there was a 3-year famine - as David prays to God in Psalm 139:24: See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.
- We should consult God before making any decisions - Joshua and the Israelites didn't do that
- God always keeps His promises - and He expects us to do the same - even if it's a promise from years ago (400 years in the case of Israel)
- Just like David made atonement for the sin of Saul - Jesus made atonement for our sin by His death on that cruel cross - when His body was left exposed on a hill
- As Hebrews 9:22 says: without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.
- God answers prayers in His own way and in His own timing

Loose End 2 - Israel's Arch Enemy - the Philistines - need to be dealt with (2 Samuel 21:15-22)

- The second loose end is the lingering problem of Israel's arch enemy - the Philistines

[PowerPoint 4-Philistines]

- As v15 says - Once again there was a battle between the Philistines and Israel
- The Philistines have always been a constant thorn in Israel's side
- The Philistines did not worship the one true God of Israel - they worshipped false gods (Ashtoreth, Dagon and Baal-Zebub)
- And we read in v15 - David was leading in the battle and became exhausted
- David's getting old (I think many of us can relate to that!)
- In his exhaustion - David is almost killed
- But he has a loyal team - and Abishai (David's nephew) rescues him
- In this section we're told of 4 battles and 4 defeats of Philistines
- Notably one of the victories is against a giant of a man with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot (helpful when counting and makes eating cheezels much more fun!)
- We're told about these defeats to show that David is getting everything in order for the next King of Israel, which will be King Solomon

## [PowerPoint 6-Application]

### Application

- In this chapter - there is a **price for establishing and maintaining peace**
- In the first section - **peace cost 7 men their lives**
- In the second section - **peace meant many battles with the arch enemy - Philistines**
- We have an arch enemy too - **it's sin** - **sin prevents** us having a proper **relationship with God** - **and prevents peace with Him**
- That arch enemy of sin has to be dealt with - **by Jesus**

### David - the lamp of Israel (2 Samuel 21:17)

#### [PowerPoint 7-2 Sam 21:17]

- Notice too in v17 that when **David's men saw that David was getting old and in danger**, they swore to him, saying, "**Never again will you go out with us to battle, so that the lamp of Israel will not be extinguished.**"
- David is described here as - **the lamp of Israel**
- David was vital to Israel - He was their **King**, their **military leader** and **more importantly their spiritual leader** - guiding them towards God - **like a lamp shows the way in the dark**
- Yet as we've discovered **David is a flawed leader** (like we are all flawed) - when David consults God and follows God's way - **he is tremendous and things go well** - but as we've also seen in the past few months - **when he doesn't consult God and goes his own way** - things are disastrous for him and the nation

- As much as David is described as the Lamp of Israel - that should not be distinguished
- This should remind us of someone greater - that David points to - a descendant of David's to come - that's Jesus

### Jesus - the Light of the World (John 8:12-20)

#### [PowerPoint 8-Jesus light of the world]

- In our NT passage today, Jesus describes Himself as the Light of the World - John 8:12 - and He says: "Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
- Just like when we shine a torch in a dark corner of a room - it exposes all the dust and dirt and cobwebs
- Jesus is saying - He is like a light that shines in people's lives and exposes all their dirty horrible sins - and He calls people to come out of those dark sins and into His wonderful light - and to follow Him - follow His way - that leads to forgiveness of those sins - and leads to peace with God - and ultimately leads to everlasting life in Heaven

### Application

#### [PowerPoint 9-Application]

- Perhaps it's time for us to shine the torch on our lives - and repent of the sin in those dark corners of our lives
- We can't hide that sin from God - He knows all about it
- Have we repented of the sin in the dark corners of our life?

- Jesus the Light of the World - shines His light on our sin - and He exposes it
- If you haven't already - today would be a great day to come into the light of Jesus

### A Challenge (Matt 5:14-16)

[PowerPoint 10-We are lights of the world]

- To finish up then - I'd like to throw out a challenge for us today
- In Matthew 5:14-16 Jesus says this to His followers and that includes us:
- **14 "You are the light of the world.** A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. **15** Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. **16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.
- Jesus is giving us a huge compliment here - He describes us as being lights of the world like Him
- If you like - He's the Master Light and we are his team of spot lights
- As well as giving us a huge compliment though - Jesus gives us great responsibility
- We're not just light receivers - we're also light givers
- We are called to have concern for others - as well as ourselves
- We cannot live just for ourselves - but must shine the light and love of Jesus to others - so they too can come out of darkness of their sin and into the light of Jesus

- As Jesus said - we're not to put a bowl over the light we have in Jesus - we are to shine that light of Jesus - so people will want to join us and follow Jesus
- Jesus says - this brings glory to God the Father
- It's easy for us to get too comfortable and say - well I believe in Jesus - I'm okay - and have little concern for others who don't know Jesus
- Our country and the world right now are in a spiritual famine
- Because we've forgotten what Jesus said that we're His lights too
- So, let's shine- for HIM
- Let's pray...