

**Message #28****II Samuel 21:1-22**

II Samuel 21 is the chapter that occurs before II Samuel 22. II Samuel 22 is an amazing chapter in which David praises God for His remarkable restoration and deliverance.

So based on this observation, we would conclude that the events that take place in II Samuel 21 are a prelude to that great praise.

David is now back in Jerusalem. Absalom, who led a revolt, is dead. Sheba, who led a revolt, is dead. New appointments have been made and David is back again reigning as king. It had been a long process of bringing him back, but he had repented of his sin and God had forgiven him and had restored him.

Everything that is now happening is, of course, in control of the sovereign God. Things are being used by God to actually establish him as king. This is one of those episodes.

**DAVID IS ESTABLISHED BY GOD AS HIS HONORED KING BY PRAYING ABOUT PROBLEMS AND SUCCESSFULLY SOLVING PROBLEMS.**

Problems come and God used those problems to help develop David.

There are three distinct episodes that occur here that really do show God is once again on David's side.

**EPISODE #1** – David consults God about the reason for a drought and does the right thing to end the drought. **21:1-9**

We are not exactly sure when this occurred, but it was during the days of David's reign after he was back in Jerusalem reigning as king.

At some point there was a famine that lasted for three straight years. Now a famine that lasted three years in Israel was considered to be a major judgment of God.

A few weeks ago, in Jeremiah, we quoted something H. A. Ironside said. Until people actually see the trouble coming from the hand of God, they will never repent. Well David was back in a frame of mind where he realized that this famine was from God and he, as king, needed to do something about it.

According to **verse 1**, David went to God to ask Him why the famine and God told him it was a delayed judgment against the house of Saul for putting the Gibeonites to death.

Saul tried to annihilate the Gibeonites even though Joshua had entered into a covenant agreement with them (Josh. 9:15).

During the days of Joshua, Joshua made a peace covenant with the Gibeonites to let them live. They actually swore an oath before God that they would live (Josh. 9:19-20). The Gibeonites had feared Israel and God and wanted to be on their side, which is why they wanted to make a peace agreement.

Well, King Saul struck them down some 300 plus years later. There was blood guiltiness to the point that God pronounced a famine on Israel's land. Truth is Saul is long dead, but this had not been resolved so God was withholding His blessings from His own people because nothing had been done to make this matter right. **God does not just forget about or overlook previous evil sins.**

So when David learned that God was punishing the land with this famine because of this, he decided, as king, to bring the Gibeonites in so they could resolve this.

According to **verses 2-3**, David contacted the Gibeonites and asked them what he could do to make this right so that they would bless Israel so that God would bless Israel again. David wants to "make atonement" for the wrong. What that means is he wants to satisfy these people by making proper amends for the wrongs that had been done.

There is an important truth to see from this. When someone does something wrong, it needs to be made right and there needs to be atoning restitution made for the wrong. There needs to be a meeting with those who have been wronged and there needs to be a willingness to say what do we need to do to make this right. This kind of action does please God.

According to **verse 4**, the Gibeonites said we don't want money and we don't want to have anyone killed. So David said tell me what you want me to do to make this right and I will do it.

According to **verse 5-6**, the Gibeonites said give us seven of Saul's descendants and we will hang them before the LORD in Gibeah. Saul had done the evil and Saul's family needed to be held accountable for the evil. He wanted them out of the land and he wanted to exterminate them.

So they said give us seven of his relatives and we will hang them. The number seven represents a complete representation of Saul's family. So David agreed.

According to **verses 7-9**, David made the selection of Saul's descendants who would pay for the crimes.

Because of the agreement David made with his good friend Jonathan, he spared Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son (I Sam. 20:42). He had affirmed his connection to him on his way back to Jerusalem (II Sam. 19:24ff). Had not Mephibosheth gone to David to tell him that Ziba had lied and he was still behind David, this may have been a different outcome, but this matter had been resolved. Again we see the sovereign hand of God in that.

According to **verse 8**, of the seven chosen to be executed, two of them were sons of Saul and five were Saul's grandchildren.

Because the two sons selected were the offspring of a concubine, they were not eligible for kingship. Furthermore, we are not able to determine whether or not they had sided with Sheba, who was leading a revolt against David, from Saul's family. It is possible that these were guilty.

According to **verse 9**, David handed the men over to the Gibeonites and they hanged them in the mountain before the presence of the LORD.

Obviously the famine was lifted and the barley harvest was a good one.

**EPISODE #2** – David honors the house of Saul by reburying the bones of Saul and his family.  
**21:10-14**

Now just when we think this story could not get anymore weird, David is confronted with another episode.

Rizpah was one of Saul's widows and the mother of the two men who were killed by the Gibeonites.

According to **verse 10**, Rizpah spread a sackcloth on a rock where she remained for a period of about six months, from early spring until early fall. During this time she protected the bones of the dead bodies from desecrations. She did not sleep during the nights and she kept the predator birds and animals away from the bodies of her sons.

According to **verses 11-12**, when King David learned what she had done or was doing, he went and took the bones of Saul and Jonathan from the men of Jabesh-gilead.

These were the people who lived about 50 miles NE of Jerusalem and these were the men who went and got Saul and his son's bones out of Philistine land (I Sam. 31:11-13). David had a good relationship with these men and honored them for doing that when he was king (II Sam. 2:4-6).

According to **verse 13**, David went and he got the bones of Saul and his sons and he brought them to a place of burial and buried them and those who had been hanged in the grave of Kish, Saul's father, and buried them all there.

Now notice the end of **verse 14**, when David did all of this, "God was moved by prayer for the land." He lifted the famine judgment.

**EPISODE #3** – David is given by God a great victory in routing the Philistines. **21:15-22**

The Philistines were one of Israel's most problematic opponents from the days of Samson until the end of the days of David.

According to **verse 15**, the Philistines were at war again with Israel, and David went down to fight and he became weary.

Let's face it; David is getting older and when you get older you don't have the strength you had when you were younger. Plus as you get older, you just get tired of fighting with people.

According to **verse 16**, Ishbi-benob, who was a descendant of the giants, had a spear that weighed 300 shekels of bronze and he also had a new sword. Three hundred shekels is about 7.5 pounds. He must have been a punk next to Goliath, whose spears weighed 600 shekels of iron, which is 19-22 pounds (I Sam. 17:7).

Anyway, this giant's goal was to kill David. He had a brand new sword and the first person he wanted to use it on was David. He may have been telling people that this was what he was going to do. Frankly, he is a big-mouthed punk.

He was well aware of the fact that David was older and didn't have the strength and agility he once had. He probably thought that he now had the advantage and could go down in history as the giant who dropped David.

So now that David is king again, all enemies have not magically disappeared.

According to **verse 17**, Abishai, on a much smaller scale, dropped Ishbi-benob, just as David had dropped Goliath many years prior to this.

Also according to **verse 17**, David's own men realized David was old and they did not want him out on the field of battle with them. They considered him to be the "lamp of Israel" and they did not want something bad happening to him.

So in the aftermath of this, the men of David said, you will not go with us again, we will do the fighting. The reason is "so that you do not extinguish the lamp of Israel."

**What is happening here is the people are beginning to realize David is our King and David is the link to the blessings of God.**

According to **verse 18**, another war took place with the Philistines and Sibbecai the Hushathite struck down Saph, another relative of the giants. This battle took place at "Gob" about 20 miles west of Jerusalem. David would actually promote Sibbecai to one of his honored fighting "mighty men" (I Chron. 11:29).

According to **verse 19**, there was another Philistine whose name was Goliath, who also had a huge spear. There was another war at Gath and this giant, who was the son of Goliath who was also a giant who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot (**v. 20**).

In I Chronicles 20:5-8 we read, “And there was war with the Philistines again, and Elhanan the son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittitite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver’s beam. Again there was war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature who had twenty-four fingers and toes, six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot; and he also was descended from the giants. When he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David’s brother, killed him. These were descended from the giants in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.”

He, too, defied Israel, and Jonathan, the son of Shimei, David’s brother, struck this giant down (**v. 21**).

Goliath had four sons and they all fell by the hand of David and his men. So Abishai drops one giant. Elhanan drops another giant. Jonathan drops another giant.

It was as if God was starting all over. He was taking David back in time, again showing David was God’s king.

These episodes are all reminding David, I made you king. I have brought you back and you are again king.