

David Avenges the Gibeonites, Part II

Call to Worship: Psalm 125:1-2

1st Scripture: Joshua 9

2nd Scripture: 2 Samuel 21:1-9

Hymn #35- *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*

Hymn Insert- *His Robes for Mine*

Hymn #195- *Alas! And did My Savior Bleed*

Introduction:

At some point, during the reign of David, there was an unrelenting famine in the land, which continued for three years strong. Obviously concerned, David inquires of the Lord, and finds that this famine was a divine curse, put upon the Promised Land because of King Saul's sin against the Gibeonites. In violation of the covenant, which Joshua and the elders of Israel had formerly made with the Gibeonites, Saul had attacked and massacred many of the Gibeonites because of his misguided, pride-driven zeal for Israel and Judah. Lacking a fear of God, and consumed with his own pride, Saul had no problem contradicting God, by not utterly destroying those whom God had commanded him to utterly destroy (the Amalekites), and destroying those with whom Israel was in covenant (the Gibeonites).

And so, God, in accordance with His own preordained purposes, brought forth this national guilt, incurred by Saul, into the reign of David, to be dealt with accordingly. David then, humbly went to the Gibeonites, and sought to rectify the situation, by submitting himself to whatever they deemed acceptable as an atonement. Highlighting their own integrity concerning the matter, the Gibeonites sought no monetary compensation, and had no desire to see any Israelites suffer for what Saul had initiated. Instead, they requested that David deliver seven of Saul's descendants over to the Gibeonites, so that they could hang them in Gibeah (Saul's hometown), and thereby, seek the Lord's blessing on the land. This was agreeable to David, who then took Saul's two sons (by way of his concubine Rizpah), along with the five sons of Merab (Saul's daughter), and delivered them over to the Gibeonites to be hung.

Last time, we sought to lay a lot of groundwork, explaining all that had happened here, especially addressing questions related to the timing and design of God, in dealing with this matter, at this time and in this way. Just doing that, took an hour, leaving no time to bring forth relevant applications for us. This morning, I want to commit the whole of our time, to bringing

forth a handful of applications from these verses, which I believe can benefit us, before moving on to verses 10 and following.

I. Relevant Applications

1) Brethren, ponder again David's attitude and response toward God's judgment on Israel. On top of all that David has already gone through, he had to deal with a three year famine, which had come upon the land, because of sins committed during the reign of King Saul. David had no direct contact with the wrong done to the Gibeonites. And yet, his reign, suffered the consequences of Saul's sin. And remember, he endured three years of famine before even finding out about what Saul had done.

And so, when God tells David that Saul and his bloodthirsty house had caused this, how did David respond? [irony - Shimei charged *David* with being a bloodthirsty rogue] Well, when we look in the text, interestingly enough, what we don't find David doing, is complaining. No, rather, he submits himself to God and takes steps to resolve the dilemma in a way, which would appease both God and the Gibeonites. He does not question God's righteousness or His design, for choosing to delay this judgment until David's reign. And again, consider that God's delay, leads David to have to humble himself before the minority, foreign Gibeonites, putting himself at their mercy. He says to them, "Whatever you ask, I will do."

What principle was David living by here, brethren? Perhaps, the principle which his son, Solomon had learned from him, and penned in Proverbs 3:5-6? "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." David knew enough; he had experienced enough to know that God's timing is perfect, that God's glory is paramount, and that the Creator ought never to be questioned/interrogated by the creature.

Brethren, may we adopt and embrace such a humble, "creature worthy" attitude, in all of our dealings with God's providence. We are but splinters on the ship of God's creation, and we must trust Him to do with His ship, as He sees best and when He sees best, trusting fully that He can and will, only do what is righteous and best. Let us ever embrace the language of our Lord, which speaks to the Father, "Nevertheless, not My will, but Thy will be done." And though

things may seem confusing in the present; although two and two, don't seem to be adding up to four, in the present, we can be beyond certain, that when the dust settles, none of us will say, "Wow, God blew it this time!" In fact, His actions and His providence will only prove to be better than we have ever comprehended, even at our most spiritually "in tune" times, in this life, let alone the times that we are confused or hindered by the darkness of trials.

2) Notice the weight of importance that God places on covenants, brethren. Is it not interesting to notice, that during the time of Joshua, Israel would have had the right to destroy the Gibeonites (indeed, they were commanded to destroy all of the heathen nations, within the land of Canaan), but once Israel (failing to seek God's counsel) was deceived and had made a covenant with the Gibeonites, they were no longer permitted to destroy them? God would not allow Israel to go back on its word.

Does this not speak loudly, as to the value that God places on maintaining one's integrity? Considering that the whole basis of our faith is fixed upon the truthfulness of God's Word, and that the devil is the father of lies, and that God Himself cannot lie, this ought not to surprise us, but brethren, how many in our day, from the top down, see no real harm in twisting or tampering with the truth?

If we are to be children of the living God, then brethren, let us walk in the integrity of our heavenly Father, and let us embrace truth with both arms, though it leads us to forfeit all else in the process. And dear husbands and wives, what of your vows, which you have taken before God and men, when you joined together as one, in holy matrimony? Are you still striving to keep those vows; to love and to hold, and to cast no eye upon another, till death do you part? Whatever those vows meant to you, when you took them, to God, they were what you stated. Indeed, we are all sinners; our flesh will contend with us the whole way through, but by the grace of God, endeavor to fulfill those vows; strive at the least, and God will be your help. Fight the lustful eye of temptation that would look upon another man or woman, the way in which, you ought only to look upon your spouse! Fight the selfish and lazy temptation, which would lead you to fall short of seeking to continually work at making your marriage more glorious and reflective of the union that exists between Christ and His church! Set your marriage at the very top of your list of priorities, just below your personal relationship with God in Christ! Improve

upon it, look for ways to advance it; make it your daily motion to draw nearer and nearer to your spouse, preventing the flame from ever going out. And if it has already gone out, plead with God to help you fan, even the remnant of smoke, into a flame! Honor Him, and the One who can bring the camel through the eye of a needle, most certainly, will help you restore vibrancy and romance to a once dead marriage! God takes covenants seriously, and so should we! Even David dared not break his covenant with Jonathan, leading him to spare Mephibosheth here, when seven of Saul's descendants were required for an atonement to the Gibeonites. [Covenant of church membership as well]

3) Let us beware of ever seeing God's delays as anything more than *delays*. God will never, ever set apart His justice, and though there may be times that He delays, patiently, even for a lengthy period of time, justice will always be served, and that, to the fullest. What you don't want to do is to presumptuously take His delays for granted. Indeed, His delays are tokens of grace, but failing to see them in their proper light, will only add to the judgment of those who are outside of Christ.

If you are an unbeliever this morning; if you are outside of Christ, and continuing to live in your sins, know that every moment of delay, which you exhaust, in the continual abuse of God's Law; which you exhaust by failing to seek God in Christ, will only add to the magnitude of your judgment, when you stand before God at His Judgment Seat. Every right will be wronged. You are getting away with absolutely nothing in this life, and even, every careless word, which you have spoken, will be required of you then. God never, ever lays aside His justice, under any circumstance, anymore than He would lay aside His own Being and Majesty. See, in God's dealing with Israel's sin against the Gibeonites, the absolute certainty of a coming judgment and reckoning. You will stand before God, friend! And you will never be ready for that day, if you remain unrepentant and outside of Jesus Christ! Only Jesus, can absorb the full weight of your sin; only He can take away the full debt that you owe, by the power of His cross, upon which He was crucified on behalf of sinners. Either you will hang, as it were, in eternal conscious judgment, forever, or Christ will have hung for you, if you come to Him by faith.

And to my brothers and sisters in Christ, see this, from the standpoint of the Gibeonites, as well. The gross wrongs, which they had unrighteously absorbed, seemed to go forgotten and

overlooked from the standpoint of God, and being foreigners to Israel, gave them even less of a hope of recognition. But God never forgot their covenant with Joshua, did He? And to that end, they were given preference, even over the Jews, when that covenant was broken by the Jews. Well, if you are in covenant with Yeshua (Jesus), and that, not an accidental covenant, how much more will God remember you, and all of the afflictions you have borne for His name's sake? God has not forgotten your labors, my suffering brother/sister in Christ! Your tears are precious to Him, and they are held up in a bottle as it were, and He will remember you! Indeed, He has never forgotten! Remain faithful and be certain, that no matter what, all wrongs will be righted on the Day of Judgment! And all of your God-honoring investments in this life, though seemingly unnoticed from the standpoint of the world, will receive their due and proper reward in glory! He sees, He knows, He has not forgotten your labor of love! Remain faithful to the end, and the crown of glory will be yours! His delays are but for your sanctification and growth, in the present, but again, they are just that, *delays*. He is not slack concerning His promises! [Concerning the return of Christ, as well - a day = 1000 years and vice versa, not willing that any should perish]

4) For the sake of time, brethren, let me leave you with one more application, before we close. Even as the Scriptures make their way from an Old Covenant emphasis, focused on the nation of Israel, to a New Covenant emphasis, focused on the church, let us recognize the sobering reality of how our *individual* sins can, at least temporally, harm our local church.

Your sins can and do affect the whole church. Consider that, our Lord refers to us as a "body," brethren (or parts of the same Temple), emphasizing the unity, which we have in Christ, in a very profound and sobering way. When one part hurts, we all hurt. The churches in Revelation were rebuked and encouraged corporately, though there certainly were some amongst each of the churches, who were contrary to the overall rebuke or encouragement.

And so, where am I going with this? As we have seen with Israel, see in the church, that the privilege we have in Christ, is beyond comprehension, but with that same privilege, comes great responsibility. We represent the True and Living God! We bear His Name! And so, there is the critical importance of rightly representing the God, whose Name we bear, brethren! We don't want to miss this! We don't want to be the cause of famine in the spiritual life of the

church! We must pursue holiness, as individuals; the individual bricks of the Most Holy Place must all be gold, if they are to unite and form a Holy Temple! Now, while we are ever holy in Christ, God will not be mocked. We cannot live comfortably in sin, and think that God will simply wink past our sins.

Brothers, when you lust after a woman that is not your wife, your sin involves the whole body, and can grieve the Holy Spirit, who indwells us. When you lie, cheat, steal, dishonor the Lord's Day, give yourself over to idolatry of any kind, forsake the gathered assembly; whatever it may be, your sins affect the whole body!

And so, even as we prepare to take the Lord's Supper this morning, let us examine ourselves, and see where we stand, today. Have you drifted or gone astray in some way? If so, perhaps there is a famine in your spiritual life, because of it? Perhaps, there is a famine in the church, because of drifting hearts in this body! Well, let us seek to return to God, right here, this morning, on His terms. And here is the great news, brethren: We don't have to search for a reconciling atonement, do we? Through Christ, who already hung for us in judgment, we can return to the Lord; we can repent and return to Him, and anticipate showers of blessing, once again. Christ can more than satisfy, for our sins, brethren! But, let us come back to Him, right here and now. Let us confess our sins and leave them behind, and let us, once again, bathe ourselves in the blood which speaks better things than the blood of Abel! Christ can swallow up the sins of our entire body, brethren; indeed, of our entire nation and world for that matter! Though sin has abounded, in Him, grace abounds much more! But, let us return to Him as individuals and as a church, if we have gone astray.

There are several other applications, which can be taken from this text, brethren, but we will leave it here for now, and move on, next time, Lord willing.

[Ex: Our guilt in Adam-- our innocence in Christ-- like Saul's descendants in Saul-- representative heads...etc]

AMEN!!!

The Lord's Supper!