

II Samuel 21:1--22

Lesson #21, The Terror of the Lord

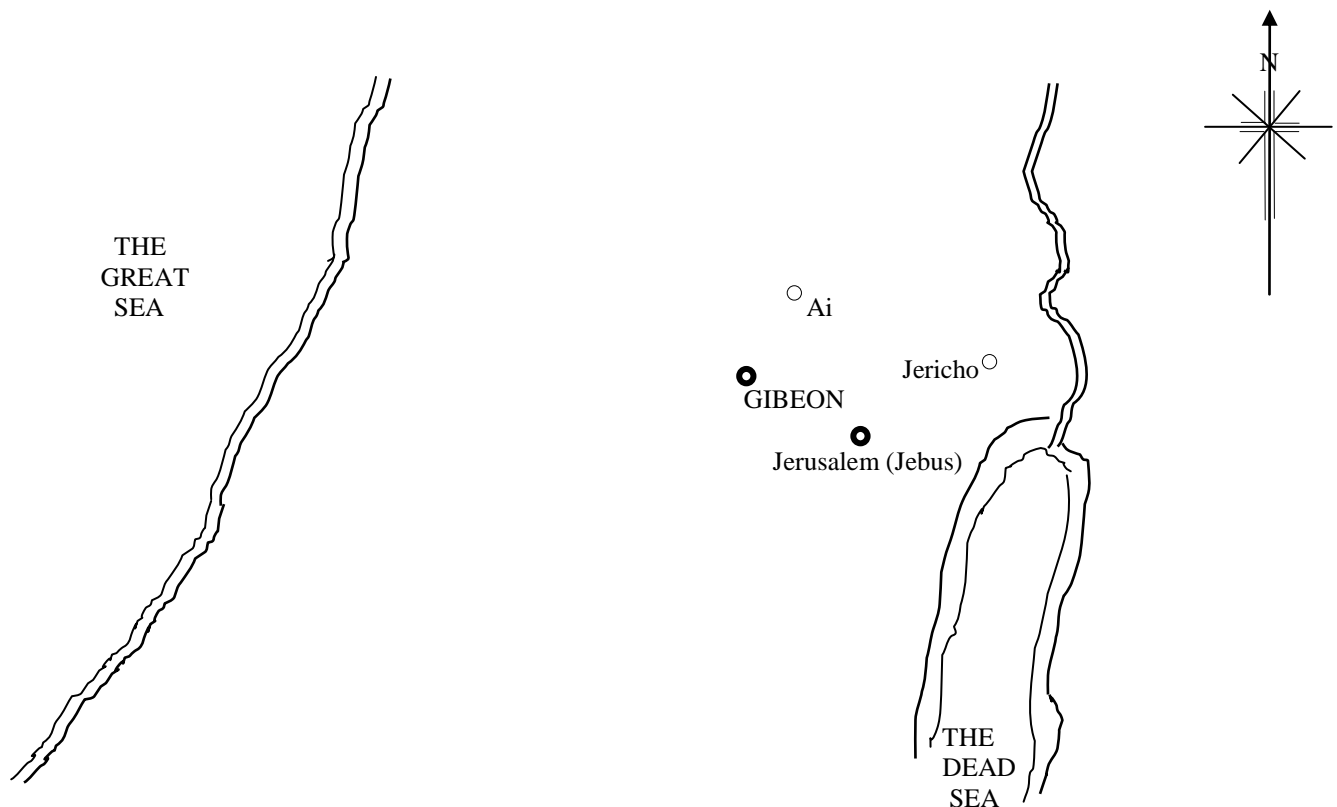
“David’s life was unendingly encumbered with the household of Saul. While Saul lived, David was always hiding himself in secret places or was banished from his homeland. When Saul was slain in combat with the Philistines, Judah crowned David king. Yet for ten years David was in an armed stand-off with Abner, Saul’s first cousin who controlled the ten tribes of Israel through the manipulation of Ish-bosheth (Saul’s son). While fleeing for his life from his own son Absalom, David endured the slanders, curses, and violence of Shimei who was ‘of the house of Saul’.

As victory over Absalom was being savoured, the king again had an unpleasant confrontation with Shimei and was compelled to settle a squabble between Mephibosheth (Saul’s grandson) and Ziba (Saul’s servant. No sooner were these annoying matters settled than Sheba, of the tribe of Saul, instituted a new rebellion against David by the ten tribes of Israel.

All this occurred before David had set foot in Jerusalem following the civil war. Finally on the last day of his reign, David found it necessary to instruct Solomon on the handling of Shimei (I Kings 2:2-9).

Other fallout from the misdeeds of Saul required the attention of David in the administration of the kingdom. A sample of these knotty problems is given to us in II Samuel 21:1-14. This incident began without David’s awareness that Saul had anything to do with a current serious difficulty in his nation. There was a famine in Israel for three consecutive years”.¹

1 Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David sought the presence of the Lord. And the Lord said, “It is for Saul and his bloody house, because he put the Gibeonites to death.”



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[1.] After reading the lesson heading, why do you suppose the Lord never cut David any slack?

[2.] v:1, By reviewing Joshua chapter 9, find out who the Gibeonites were, & write why Saul wanted to kill them?

[3.] What would be the significance of Josh 9:19?

[4.] For those under the law, what is the meaning of Num 14:18?

[5.] How is this cycle broken?

2 So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them (now the Gibeonites were not of the sons of Israel but of the remnant of the Amorites, and the sons of Israel made a covenant with them, but Saul had sought to kill them in his zeal for the sons of Israel and Judah). 3 Thus David said to the Gibeonites, "What should I do for you? And how can I make atonement **(What is the ransom price to "cover" the injustice done to them?)** that you may bless the inheritance of the Lord?" 4 Then the Gibeonites said to him, " We have no concern of silver or gold with Saul or his house, nor is it for us to put any man to death in Israel." And he said, "I will do for you whatever you say."

[6.] v:4, What did the Gibeonites consider of no value to accomplish atonement?

[7.] According to I Pet 1:18-19, how were we, as twice born Christians, ransomed (redeemed)?

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5 So they said to the king, " The man who consumed us and who planned to exterminate us from remaining within any border of Israel, 6 let seven men from his sons be given to us, and we will hang them before the Lord in Gibeah of Saul, the chosen of the Lord." 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 oath of the Lord which was between them, between David and Saul's son Jonathan.

8 So the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, Armoni and Mephibosheth (**note: Saul's son, not Jonathan's**) whom she had borne to Saul, and the five sons of Merab the daughter of Saul, whom she had borne to Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite (**note: not Gileadite**).

9 Then he gave them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the mountain before the Lord, so that the seven of them fell together; and they were put to death in the first days of harvest at the beginning of barley harvest.

[8.] v:5-6, So what was their price of ransom?

[9.] According to v:7, why was Mephibosheth spared?

[10.] v:8, According to II Sam 3:7, who was Rizpah & what were the names of her sons?

[11.] v:8 again, According to I Sam 14:49 & 18:17-19, who was Merab?

The "providence of God" or "Sovereignty" and some things to think about

First, what do we mean when we use the term "providence of God"?

According to I Sam 14:49, what were the names of Saul's two daughters

From I Sam 18:17-19, what happened to Saul's promise?

According to II Sam 6:20-23, what happened regarding the daughter, of Saul, that was given to David?

Now back to II Sam 21:8-9. With these facts in mind, if it were not for the "providence of God", whose sons could have been hung?

Also, what do you think, was God, looking ahead, removing some of the problems for Solomon?

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10 And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it for herself on the rock, from the beginning of harvest until it rained on them from the sky; and she allowed neither the birds of the sky to rest on them by day nor the beasts of the field by night.

11 When it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done, 12 then David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh-gilead, who had stolen them from the open square of Bethshan, where the Philistines had hanged them on the day the Philistines struck down Saul in Gilboa. 13 He brought up the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from there, and they gathered the bones of those who had been hanged. 14 They buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son in the country of Benjamin in Zela, in the grave of Kish his father; thus they did all that the king commanded, and after that God was moved by prayer for the land.

[12.] v:10, from the beginning of harvest until it rained, **Approximately how long did Rizpah protect the dead bodies (hint, v:13)?**

[13.] v:11-14, **When David found out about Rizpah's act of heart-wrenching agony, what did he command?**

[14.] v:14b, **Was God satisfied and allowed the famine to cease?**

This next section, of II Sam 21, describes the defeat of 4 Philistine giants at the hands of David and his men. Though these events cannot be located chronologically with any certainty, the narratives of victory provide a fitting preface to David's song of praise, which magnifies God's deliverance (22:1-51). See I Chr 20:4-8.

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15 Now when the Philistines were at war again with Israel, David went down and his servants with him; and as they fought against the Philistines, David became weary. 16 Then Ishbi-benob, who was among the descendants of the giant, the weight of whose spear was three hundred shekels of bronze in weight, was girded with a new sword, and he intended to kill David. 17 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah helped him, and struck the Philistine and killed him. Then the men of David swore to him, saying, " You shall not go out again with us to battle, so that you do not extinguish the lamp of Israel."

18 Now it came about after this that there was war again with the Philistines at Gob; then Sibbecai the Hushathite struck down Saph, who was among the descendants of the giant. 19 There was war with the Philistines again at Gob, and Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim the Bethlehemite killed Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. 20 There was war at Gath again, where there was a man of great stature who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; and he also had been born to the giant. 21 When he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimei, David's brother, struck him down. 22 These four were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

[15.] v:15, David became weary. Of what might this be a sign?

[16.] v:17, Because of the above, what did David's men decide?

[17.] Until the Lord's return, all twice born Christians will get old. What has always been God's provision for when they cannot continue to function?

[18.] What is the most important ingredient for "that next generation"?