



2 Samuel 17-20

Tape #7099
II Samuel 17: 20-21
By Chuck Smith

David is just fleeing from Jerusalem. He has gotten out of the city, just before the advancing armies of his son, Absalom. David's close friend, one of his chief counselors Ahithophel, has defected, has joined the forces with Absalom. Not only has he defected, but he has great bitterness in his heart towards David. This is a little difficult to understand. Surely David did not understand the feelings that Ahithophel had. As David writes concerning Ahithophel, he said, "We took sweet counsel together, we went into the house of God together. You know, I can't understand it, you, my friend. If it were an enemy that had approached me, it would've been easier to take, but it was you!". Yet it seems that within the heart of Ahithophel, there was tremendous bitterness towards David. Because as we look at the story tonight, he really is wanting to kill David. Promising that if Absalom would just give him some troops to pursue David immediately, he would destroy David, and deliver the kingdom completely to Absalom. He had no intention of destroying those that went with David, just David alone. He said, "As soon as David is dead, the rest of them will have nothing to fight for, and they'll come and be your servants".

So Ahithophel said to Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night: And I will come upon him while he is weary and weak handed, and will make him afraid: and all of the people that are with him shall flee; and I will only smite the king (17:1-2):

So here's Ahithophel, once a close associate of David. I cannot say he was a friend! Though, David looked upon him as a friend, there was this within his heart. This bitterness that bred murder.

And I will bring back all of the people unto thee: the man whom you seek is as if all returned: so the people shall be in peace. [So, "All we need to do is kill David, and everything will be okay".] And the saying pleased Absalom well, [And here's David's son, fellow talking about killing his dad, and it pleases him. It looks like good counsel. Willing to destroy his own father, for his own ambition.] and it pleased all of the elders of Israel (17:3-4).

Sort of discouraging I guess, for a person in a position of leadership. When a revolt takes place, uh you find that there are many who you trusted in, thought they were your friends, who really were not your friends.

So Absalom said, Call now Hushai the Archite also, let us hear what he has to say. [Now Hushai was the one, the older man who came out after David. David had said to him, "Look, you're too old to travel with us, we're gonna have to move fast. You go back and you pledge allegiance to Absalom, but may the Lord use you, to bring to naught the counsel of Ahithophel". So Hushai went back and pledged his allegiance to Absalom, however he was a part of David's company. So Absalom called Hushai to get his counsel.] And when Hushai was come to Absalom, he spoke to him, and he said, Ahithophel has told us that this is what we should do. What do you say? And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel has given is not good at the present time. For, Hushai said, you know your father and his men, that they are mighty men, and right now they are chafing in their minds, like a bear that's been robbed of her cubs in the field: and your father is a man of war, and he will not be lodging with the people (17:5-8).

In other words, "You're father's been around too long, and he knows what it is to be on the run. He won't stay with the, he'll be hiding someplace in a pit, or he won't be with the people. So when you come upon the people, hey you know Joab and Abishai and those guys that are with David, they're really tough. In the first assault, they're gonna wipe out the first crew that come in. When word gets around that the first assault was defeated, then everybody's gonna get afraid, and they're gonna flee, and man! You've blown the whole thing Absalom! Now here's what you do."

Wait just a little while and gather all of the people of Israel together unto you, all of the tribes from Dan down to Beersheba, and then you personally lead the assault against your father; you go out and lead the army. So we will come upon him in some place where he will be found, and we will light upon him like dew

falls on the ground: and of him and all of the men that are with him we won't leave a single one. Moreover, if he's gone into a city, then we will besiege that city, and we'll draw it into the river, with ropes, until there's not one small stone left in that city. And Absalom and all of the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. [So what Ahithophel said seemed to make sense. But then when Hushai gave his little speech, he persuaded the people that, "Hey, this sounds much better". It, of course appealed to the vanity of Absalom. "Don't let Ahithophel go down and get all the glory. You go down yourself, leading all of the people."] *For the Lord had appointed Hushai to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom (17:14).*

Now, there are those who say that had Absalom followed the counsel of Ahithophel, that surely David would've been defeated, and Absalom would've been established as king. I don't think so. For I believe that David continued to reign as the result of God's providence. And, I believe that God would've delivered David from Ahithophel and his men. But God allowed the counsel of Hushai to stand, because God is wanting to get rid of Absalom. Notice, the Lord is seeking to bring a case against Absalom, and God wants Absalom destroyed in this battle. So that the revolt will be put over, put away completely.

So when Hushai had thus counseled him, he got hold of Zadok and Abiathar the priests, [Now these men were also in league with David. These three men were more or less, CIA agents, for David. They were spies in Absalom's camp. So, "He got hold of Zadok and Abiathar",] and he told them what Ahithophel had counseled, and what he had counseled. And he said, Now send quickly, your sons down to David with a message, and tell him don't stay on this side of the Jordan river, but to make haste and get across the river. Because it's quite possible that at this stage they'll change their mind, and they will send out forces even tonight to get David (17:15-16).

So, "Warn David, told him what was said, but tell him to get across on the other side of the river".

So Jonathan and Ahimaaz, they were staying outside of the city by the well of Enrogel: and a lady [Called a wench, but that word used to mean different, than we think of it now. We think of it as, as uh, it's sort of a derogatory type of a word now. But when the King James was written, uh version was written, it was just a young lady.] went out and told them. Nevertheless there was a young boy that was there, and he saw these two fellows heading down for David, and he came back and told Absalom: but they both of them ran quickly, and they came to a man's house in Bahurim, which had a well [Which was really a uh, a cistern in his courtyard.] and they went down inside of the cistern. And the woman took and spread a covering over the top of the cistern, and then she poured parched corn over the top of the covering. So that when the servants of Absalom came, and said, Where are Jonathan and Abiathar, she said, Oh they've ["already taken off"] already gone over the river and gone (17:17-20).

And the cistern, the top of it, the hole was covered.

When these fellows went out they sought them, and couldn't find them, and they came back and they returned to Jerusalem. So it came to pass, after they were departed, these two fellows came up out of the well, and they told king David, and they said to David, Arise, and pass quickly over the water: for thus hath Ahithophel counseled against you. ["Get in a place of safety."] So David arose, and all of the people that were with him, and they passed over Jordan: by the morning light and there lacked not one of them that had not gone over Jordan (17:20-22).

So they made a quick move across the Jordan river.

And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, [This guy's a poor loser.] he saddled his donkey, arose, and got home to his house, to his own city, and he put his household in order, and he hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father (17:23).

Wise man! Gave wise counsel. His counsel was like a person inquiring from an oracle of God. He, it was extremely wise, like God was speaking, almost. The wisdom that was expressed in the counsel of Hushai. He shows great wisdom in setting his household in order, taking care of all of the details. But then he shows great folly, in killing himself.

Suicide is never a solution. I think that suicide is one of the cruelest things that a person can do. Because it creates such guilt feelings on all who are left. I know of families that are almost destroyed because of suicides, within the family. Everybody blames themselves for a suicide. "Why didn't I do this, if I'd only

said that, maybe if I had done this...”, and a person just beats himself to death mentally, because of a suicide of a friend or a member of the family. It is devastating, because it just leaves that horrible, you know, “I’m responsible because I could’ve perhaps done, I should’ve recognized the signs, I should’ve said...”, you know, and it just, a person just whips himself to death, because of suicide. It isn’t an answer, it isn’t a solution. It only compounds so many times the problems that you leave in the minds and hearts of those that are left. So wise men can do stupid things.

Then David came to Mahanaim. [Now Mahanaim is the place where Jacob left his father, Laban, the last place he saw him, and he was returning home. It’s on the other side of the Jordan river.] *Absalom passed over Jordan, and he and all the men of Israel with him.* [So Absalom is pursuing after David.] *And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab:* [Now, Joab was David’s chief general.] *Amasa was a cousin to Joab, and thus a cousin to David. Amasa’s mother was Joab’s father’s sister.* [Work on that one!] *So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead. And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of [Ribbah] Rabbah and of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodebar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, Brought beds, and basins, [Don’t laugh, I worked hard on those! “Brought beds, and basins,] and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentils, and parched pulse, And honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese from the cows, for David, and for the people that were with him to eat: for they said, The people are hungry, and weary, and thirsty, because of their wilderness journey (17:24-29).*

So, these are the same people that showed kindness to Mephibosheth, the son of Saul. Who you remember, when David inquired, “Are there any descendants of Saul left?”. And they said, “The son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth, is still alive”. So, David, you remember sent to Mephibosheth, who had sought refuge in Mahanaim, and these people had sustained him, and had taken care of him. When David showed his kindness to Mephibosheth, they probably were enamored of David at that point. They loved Mephibosheth, they saw the kindness that David gave unto him. So when David was in trouble, these are the men, wealthy men, who stepped in and brought an abundance of supplies, in order to take care of David, and those that were with him, after their flight through the wilderness from Jerusalem. So, now we jump on over to chapter twenty, for last week we had the battle against Absalom. Absalom’s death, and David’s great grief over it.

Chapter 20

Now, bringing back the king, David has just crossed over the Jordan. They’re bringing their king back, and then there’s this big squabble. The men of Israel gathered together and they said to the tribe of Judah, “How come you guys didn’t wait for us to get down here? We should all bring back the king!”, you know, and they said, “Hey, he’s from the tribe of Judah, and we’re...”, you know, and this big squabble between Judah and the other tribes, as far as their bringing David back. And the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the man of Israel. A big yelling match!

There happened to be there [At this time of dissension between Judah and the other tribes.] *a [men] man of Belial, [Or a man of Satan.] whose name was Sheba, he was the son of Bichri, a Benjamite: and he blew a trumpet, and he said, We have no part in David, neither have we any inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tent, O Israel.* [In other words, “You know, let’s forget David, we don’t have any, you know, he’s for the tribe of Judah. So, to your tents O Israel”.] *So every man of Israel went up from after David and followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem (20:1-2).*

There came then a division. This division was more or less healed under Solomon, because of Solomon’s great strength and wealth. But at the death of Solomon, the division came up again, and of course, that’s when Israel was divided into the northern and the southern kingdom. So this movement is going on even at the time of David.

So David came to his house in Jerusalem; and the king took the ten women his concubines, who he had left to keep the house, and he put them in a room, and he fed them, but he would not go into them. [Because you remember, Absalom put the tent on the roof, and went in to David’s ten concubines, who he’d left to

keep the palace. So David took care of them and all, but he would not go into them.] *So they were shut up unto the day of their death, living as widows [really]. Then the king said to Amasa, [Now remember David, was angry with Joab, because Joab had disobeyed his order. He said, "Hey, take it easy with Absalom, you know, treat him well and be kind to my son Absalom", but instead, Joab killed Absalom. It made David angry with Joab, and so when he sent a message of the death of Absalom, to Amasa, his other cousin, who Absalom had made the ruler, over the armies, or the chief of the armies, he sent a letter to, or a message to Amasa, and he said, "I will make you the head over my armies". So, Amasa had been given this title of the general. Chief of the armies of David. So, "David said to Amasa",] Assemble me the men of Judah within three days, and present them here. So Amasa went to assemble the man of Judah: but he tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him (20:3-5).*

Now, why Amasa tarried longer, it is not said. He is a cousin to David. David orders him, "Be here in three days, gather the men of Judah, assemble the troops, and be here within three days". He was not. He tarried longer.

And so David said to Abishai, [Who was the brother of Joab.] If we don't do something to stop this fellow Sheba right away, he's going to do us more harm than Absalom: so take the Lord's servants, and pursue after him, lest he gets into the fenced cities, and escapes us. And there went out after him Joab's men, the Cherethites, [Who we mentioned, were David's personal bodyguards.] and the Pelethites, [Who also were a group of elite troops, and sort of the bodyguards to the king.] and all of the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after this fellow Sheba. And when they were at a great stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa caught up with them. And Joab's garment that he had on was girded unto him. [Now you read the scriptures, "Gird up your loins", and the girding of a garment. Fellows usually wore robes in those days. Long robes. When you wanted to work, or when you wanted to run, these robes would restrict you. So what they would do, is pull the robe up, and tie a sash around it. That was girding up your loins. Pulling the robe up to where it was now a mini-skirt, and tying the thing up so that now you can work easily, or run easily without the robe, tripping over your robe. So they were pursuing after this fellow Sheba. So, Joab had his robe pulled up, girded,] and this sash that he had used to gird his robe, he had put his sword in the sash; and so as Amasa came to him, his sword fell out of the sheath. [Fell on the ground.] And Joab said to Amasa, Are you in good health, my brother? [Now these guys were cousins. But Joab was upset because David had made Amasa the general over him.] And he took him by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. And Amasa didn't notice that in the left hand, Joab had picked up his sword, and he ran through the fifth rib, [Or the area of the heart, didn't have to hit him twice. I mean Joab was a tough cookie, and the guy, was smote unto the fifth rib,] struck him not again; and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri (20:6-10).

Now here is really the third murder committed by Joab. He had a way of getting rid of competition. Once before, when David was going to bring Abner, the general of Saul into his army, Joab did Abner in. Then he did in Absalom, and now Amasa, who David was intending to make the general over his armies. That is why when David was dying, he said to Solomon, his son, as he takes over the throne, he says, "Take care of Joab. That guy has given me a lot of grief, and he's shed a lot of blood. Don't let his gray hair go down to the grave in peace". We'll get to that in a couple of weeks.

So as the men, pursuing after Sheba, with Joab and Abishai, as they came to Amasa lying there in his blood, they stopped, [and they were just staring you know, and they didn't know what to do. So finally,] this fellow pulled the body over in the bushes, covered the thing over with a cloth [and all,] so that the people didn't hesitate and they went on pursuing after this fellow Sheba. And they went through all the tribes of Israel [This guy Sheba really was taken off on the run, he had gone clear up to the northern part of Israel.] to a place called Abel, of Bethmaachah, [Now this is the area that is up near Metula, in the northern most part of Israel, just slightly west of the area of Tel Dan, and near the, actually there's the Tel, right near Kiparguladi, of this Abel of Bethmaachah. And so,] this is the city into which Sheba had fled: and so when they caught up with him they began to siege a siege against this city, they built up a bank against it, [and they were beginning to assault the walls] and they were battering the wall to break it down. [In order to take this city.] And there cried a wise woman out of the city, and she said, Hear, hear; I pray thee, I want to talk

to Joab, Have him come here, so I can speak to him. And when Joab was come near to her, the woman said, Are you Joab? And he answered, I am he. And she said unto him, Hear the words of your handmaid. And he answered, I hear you. Then she spoke, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, and they surely ask counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter. And I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: and you seek to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why will you swallow up the inheritance of the Lord (20:12-19)?

Now she said, “This is one of the historic cities of Israel. The city is like a mother in Israel. Why do you want to destroy the inheritance of the Lord?”

And Joab answered and said, Far be it, from me, that I would swallow up or destroy. And she said [Yeah, ha, ha.] The matter is not so: but a man of mount Ephriam, Sheba by the son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David the king: and if you deliver him only, I'll depart from the city. The woman said to Joab, Behold, his head will be thrown over the wall. So the woman went to the men and the people of the city. [She got them together and she said, “Look, Joab is out there, they're besieging the city. They're battering the wall, and if we seek to resist them, it's going to be all of our lives. Now here's this guy Sheba, we don't know him, he comes from Ephriam, why should we all be destroyed for this guy we don't even know? Let's take off his head, throw it over the wall, so they'll leave.” So that's what they did.] And when the head came over the wall, Joab blew a trumpet and they all retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem and unto the king (20:20-22).

Now, Joab, and now we get a little listing of the officers here, the, of state.

Joab was over all of the host of Israel. [No one was ready to challenge him anymore for his title!] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites: [So he was over David's personal bodyguard. Now Benaiah became then, Solomon's chief over his army. So Benaiah was the one who fell upon Joab and killed him, and he became head over Solomon's army. But he at this time has made head over the bodyguards, the elite troops that guarded David, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites.] And Adoram was over the treasury: [He was the treasurer of Israel.] Jehoshaphat was the recorder: [The historian, the one that wrote the records.] And Sheva was the secretary of state: and Zadok and Abiathar [of course] were the priests: And Ira also the Jairite was the chief ruler about David (20:23-26).

So these are the ones that headed up Israel at this particular point.

Chapter 21

Now it would seem that chapter twenty one does not follow in a chronological order. But it gives us a series of stories that just give to us the general condition of the nation of Israel at this particular period of time. You remember when we were at the end of the book of Judges. We got several little stories that were unrelated, but they gave to us an inside into the moral conditions of Israel, at the time of the end of the Judges. This is much the same. We've come really to the end, basically of David's history. So now we get some stories that just give us insights into some of the aspects of David's reigns, and some of the conditions of Israel, at this particular time of the reign of David.

Then there was a famine in the days of David, for three years, year after year; [So consecutive years of famine.] and David inquired of the Lord. [In Hebrew, literally, David sought the face of Jehovah.] And the Lord answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites (21:1).

There are problems in the land, the nation is in trouble. They've had three years of drought. Supplies are now being rationed. David begins to realize that this isn't just coincidence, there's something wrong, and he began to seek the face of the Lord, to discover the reason why they were going through this national calamity. And as David was waiting upon the Lord, the Lord revealed the reason for this national calamity, for this drought, for this famine, was of Saul's inhumane treatment against the Gibeonites. The Gibeonites were those people who made the league with Joshua by their guise of having traveled a long way. They figured that that was the only way they could survive, was to deceive Joshua, they were successful. Joshua made a covenant with them, and when they came to Gibeah, and Joshua started to deploy the troops, they said, “Wait a minute, you can't attack that city, we have a league with you, we have this peace treaty. So Joshua said, “Well, you've deceived me, but I will honor the covenant. You will dwell among us, and live

peaceably among us, however you will be servants, you will have to chop our wood, and you'll have to take care of the temple, or the tabernacle, and make sure that everything is clean and kept up around the tabernacle.

Now, during the reign of Saul, and it isn't told in the record, but we have it here, that Saul began to put the Gibeonites to death, in his zeal, it said, for the Lord. Perhaps at the time when he put the witches to death, and perhaps it was after his failure to put the Amalikites to death, that he was gonna show, "Hey I'll get rid of all the foreigners, and purify the place", and it was wrong, because of this covenant. God expects you to honor a covenant, if you make a covenant, even though it may have been done in a false pretense, God wanted them to respect and honor the covenant. So when David, found out the cause waiting upon the Lord, seeking the face of the Lord, the Lord revealed to David the reason.

And David came to the Gibeonites, and he said unto them; [And he makes a note here.] (The Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but they were the remnant of the Amorites; the children of Israel had sworn to them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and to Judah.) Wherefore David said to the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? How can I make atonement, or a covering, that you may bless the inheritance of the Lord? And the Gibeonites said unto him, ["We can't be bought off."] We don't want silver or gold from Saul, nor from his house; neither do we want you to kill any man in Israel. And he said, Well then, what do you say, what do you want me to do for you. 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, Let seven men of [the sons] 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 (21:2-6).

So, "We want seven of his descendants to hang". So, David said, "Alright, you'll have it".

Now the king spared Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, because of the Lord's oath that was between Jonathan and David. But the king took two sons of Rizpah [Now Rizpah was a concubine of Saul,] and she bore two sons to Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; [Now this Mephibosheth, being the son of Saul, would've been a uncle to Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan. So Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, was named after his uncle. Keep that straight. He was the son of Saul, from the concubine whose name was Rizpah, and he and his brother Armoni were two of the men.] and five sons of Michal [or Michelle] the daughter of Saul, [Now this was the one that was given to David as a wife,] whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite (21:7-8):

Now this is not the other Barzillai that helped David. This is uh, a different one. But when David killed Goliath, king Saul had promised that whoever killed this giant, "Can have my daughter for a wife, and he'll be promoted", and get all this glory and everything else. This was, this was, uh Saul's incentive to the men to go out and fight the giant.

When David went out to fight the giant, Saul hesitated to give his daughter Merab, as his wife, because he became jealous of David. His older daughter Merab should've been David's wife. But instead, Saul gave her to this guy Adriel, who we read about here. And she had five sons. Merab, she should've been David's wife.

Saul put, pulled a fast one on him, and when Saul said, "Well look, take Michal", she was a gutsy little gal, and he figured, "Man, she'll be more than that guy can handle!". I mean he sort of did it as punishment to David. She became a problem to David. She was testy, nasty mouthed, and uh she, she put David down, when he came back from victory, bringing back the ark of the covenant, he was out there dancing for the Lord, blessed all of Israel. Everybody's on a spiritual high, "Ah, you know praise the Lord!", just a real spiritual high! He comes home and she's, "Ah ha, weren't you fancy out there today, playing in that linen robe like common people, you looked sick!", you know. "Shouldn't the king behave himself?", and just you know. And so there were problems between this girl and David. David says, "Hey, that's enough of your mouth gal!", so he had enough other wives and concubines, that he never bothered with her again, but just left her without children, and to experience the social curse of being childless.

However, her sister Merab who had had five sons, evidently had died, and Michal had taken, and raised those five sons. The Gibeonites want seven descendants of Saul, so David took those five sons. Perhaps again, still in spite against Michal, he took the five sons that she had raised of her sister Merab, and with the

two sons of Saul, by the concubine Rizpah, they gave them to the Gibeonites.

The Gibeonites hanged these seven descendants in the city, and on the hill before the Lord: and they fell all seven together, and they were put to death in the days of the harvest, [the barley harvest] the beginning of the barley harvest. And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took a sackcloth, [It was the mother of the two sons, “She took sackcloth”,] and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of the harvest [Which the barley harvest begins in May.] until the water dropped out of the heaven, [Until the rains began, which they began in around the end of October.] and she would not allow any of the birds of the air to rest upon them, [Or to the vultures. She would beat the vultures away from their bodies.] by day and by night. [The jackals, and the coyotes, and so forth, she would fend them off at night.] And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done. [Aiah] And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan from the men of Jabeshgilead, which had stolen them from the street of Bethshean, [Remember when Jonathan and Saul fell on mount Gilboa, right at the end of the northern end of mount Gilboa is the city Bethshean.] and the Philistines hung their bodies, [Desecrated them, hung them.] on a wall there in Bethshean, they had beheaded them (21:9-12).

But they hung their bodies on the wall. The men of Jabeshgilead came over and took the bodies and buried them over in Jabeshgilead. Now David, hearing of you know, the seven fellows, and this gal out there, protecting the bodies, as they decay.

He takes all of their bones and he buries them in the tomb that belonged to Kish, the father of Saul: and [so] they were all buried there together there in the land of Benjamin (21:13-14).

Now another little story of the things that happened at that time, it gives you a little insight into uh, some of David's conflicts with Goliath, and the descendants of Goliath.

Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and they fought against the Philistines: and David was faint. And Ishbibenob, which was one 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, was going to slay David. But Abishai the son of Zeruiah helped him, and he smote the Philistine, and he killed him. Then the man of David swore unto him saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that you quench not the light of Israel (21:15-17).

So this happened no doubt, sometime earlier. Because, we are really on a chronological order, just about six years before David's death. He's getting older at this point, and it's been a long time since David's gone out to battle. You remember he got into trouble with Bathsheba, because the troops were out fighting, and David wasn't going out anymore. But this is the reason why David ceased going out with the armies, is in this particular battle against the Philistines, he was uh, weakened, he was faint. This giant almost did him in, until Abishai came and rescued him. So, he said, “Hey no more David. You stay home. We'll do the fighting, we don't want the light of Israel to go out”.

And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob: and Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Saph, which was one of the sons of the giant (21:18).

They're gonna eliminate the family of Goliath, and all of these giants. This gives you the story of the elimination of these guys.

There was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim, a Bethlehemite, slew the brother of Goliath. And then there was yet a battle in Gath, and a man of great stature, [Must have been a fearsome looking guy] on each hand he had six fingers, and on each foot, six toes, twenty four in number; he also was born to the giant. And when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimeah the brother of David slew him. And these four were born to the giant in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants (21:19-22).

Now as we get into chapter twenty two, we have this Psalm of David. It is a psalm of God's deliverance. A beautiful psalm of David, and then we get into David's last words, his mighty men. Then the final sin of David, in numbering the people, and the buying of the place for the building of the temple. We'll try to conclude II Samuel, uh next week. I don't know what we'll make it, but we will seek to conclude it next week. So that's your assignment, read the rest of II Samuel for next week.

Again, I'm impressed with David seeking the face of the Lord to discover the reasons for the national

calamity, and how to change, the disaster they were facing. Time of national peril, three years of drought. David's answer, was seeking the face of the Lord, and as he did, God showed him the cause, and God also showed him, or led him, to the cure.

We are in a time of national peril. Our country is in big trouble. Don't have to argue that, quite obvious. From a moral standpoint, from a spiritual standpoint, from a military standpoint, from an economic standpoint, from a political standpoint. I mean, any way you want to look at it, we're in a mess. Our nation is in trouble. We are morally and spiritually bankrupt as a nation. "Righteousness exalted the nation, but sin is a reproach to many people." Our nation is in deep trouble!

It is time that God's people, as David, seek the face of the Lord. I believe that God wants to deliver us as a nation, from the peril that we are facing. I believe that God wants to bring revival, to stir our nation. As God answered Solomon, as he prayed at the dedication of the temple, that should times of national peril come, Solomon said, "If your people will turn towards this place, and seek your face, then hear thou from thy throne in heaven. Answer their prayers, and help them". And God responding to Solomon's prayer, said, "If my people call by my name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek my face", David sought the face of the Lord. God said, "I will hear from heaven, I will forgive their sins, and I will heal their nation".

We need it. We need to seek God's face. We need to call out upon the Lord. If this nation is gonna survive, it'll only survive, because God's people only got desperate, and turned off their TV's, and began to spend time seeking God.

How Satan has lulled us, mesmerized us! You know, we're almost as guilty as Nero, who fiddled while Rome burned. Things are going down the tubes, from a national standpoint. The nation is in deep trouble, and we're just fiddling. More concerned with whether or not the Rams are gonna make the Super Bowl this next year, than we are the moral conditions of our nation, our schools!

I just read in the paper today, that the National Educators Association of Teachers, have gone on record as supporting the distribution of condoms to the children in school. That's your teachers of your kids. Hey, we're, we're in trouble! That's the solution that they come up with. To solve the problem of AIDS. We can't teach them that you should wait until you're married. That is, sex is something that is sacred, it was created by God for the perpetuation of the human race. A beautiful experience in marriage, whereby two become one, in a beautiful sacred bond, and relationship. Thus you should save yourself and be pure. "No we can't teach that". So what we do is distribute condoms, "Be careful when you have your sex kids, so that you don't get AIDS, or clamydia, or any of the other diseases that are going around right now".

God help us. "My people, called by my name, humble themselves and pray, and seek my face." It's time to seek the face of the Lord! Let's do it this week. Let's see what path God opens to us. Let's see what God might reveal to us. Your prayers can make a difference. Seek the face of the Lord. And God help us, let's make a difference.