

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 10

Blessed
are the
peacemakers,
for they
shall be called
the children
of God.
Matthew 5:9

DAVID BROUGHT BACK BY HIS PEOPLE

Scripture Texts: 2 Samuel 19:1-23; 2 Samuel 19:43; 2 Samuel 20:1-2; 2 Samuel 21:1-6

In today's world no one lives to himself, but must have contact with many others. Our attitude toward them is important both to us and to them. Yes, and to God. Two tendencies are to excuse oneself and blame others, or to blame oneself and excuse others. Was David's disposition of a Christian nature? What is the Christian disposition? What is necessary that we may truly forgive and forget real injuries? Forgiveness of those who sin against us; the duty of peace-making; repentance and obedience when punished by God; necessity of atonement for sin; seeing sin as God does.

MEMORY VERSE: *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*
— *Ephesians 4:32*

Joab Reprimands David

2 Samuel 19:1-10 Absalom had been killed in battle as he was rebelling against and seeking to take the crown from his father. David, waiting at Mahanaim, was overwhelmed with grief at Absalom's death. When the men of his army heard how he mourned, they returned stealthily as defeated men ashamed of pursuing and killing Absalom.

Joab immediately went to David with stern, harsh words. **Thou has shamed . . . all thy servants . . . Thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends.** He commanded David to go out and speak to the people or **there will not tarry one with thee this night.** His sense of security and superiority must have been strong to allow him to speak this way to the king. David went, sat in the gate, and met the people.

The people were confused and divided. They felt that David who had been strong, had weakened before Absalom. Now they wished to bring him back home to restore normal conditions.

David Returns to Jerusalem

2 Samuel 19:11-18 David sent, urging Judah to bring him to Jerusalem. He based his claim on kingship, since he was of the tribe of Judah. They joined in loyalty to him and ferried him and his party over Jordan near Gilgal.

2 Samuel 19:19-23 Shimei hurried to meet David and confess his sin in cursing him as he fled from Jerusalem (**2 Samuel 16:5-13**). Was he sincerely repentant? He had cursed then because he thought David defeated. Now, might he be asking pardon to escape punishment from a victorious David? No matter. David forgave him, at least outwardly and temporarily. Abishai was for killing him now, just as he had been when he cursed, but David forbade him.

David was lenient with Shimei on the first occasion because he felt it just punishment to himself from God. Now he was lenient because he felt himself blessed in being yet king. Actually, David only postponed punishment (**1 Kings 2:8-9**).

Blessed Are the Peacemakers

2 Samuel 19:43 The tribe of Judah had been foremost in bringing back the king. This stirred jealousy in the other tribes, usually called Israel. Angry words flew. The hurt feelings of the men of Israel at not being included in Judah's plans for returning the king caused dissension. Angry words aggravated it. Sheba had the opportunity to influence the situation (**2 Samuel 20:1-2**). What would he do? He seems to have been a man of some power

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and leadership. He could drop in the oil or peace or the poison of strife. Being a wicked man, he did the latter. His reaping was as he sowed (**2 Samuel 20:14-22**).

We all meet such opportunities in the church and in our respective communities, although, in most instances, on a smaller scale. What can we do to promote peace between our brethren and others? A peacemaker *always* makes peace. This is the duty of all of God's people (**Matthew 5:9; Romans 14:19; James 3:17-18**).

The Reason for Famine

2 Samuel 21:1-4 Physical famine is a fearful thing. It came to Israel in three consecutive years. Finally **David enquired of the Lord** as to the reason for the famine. He looked for a moral cause. When he found it, he sought the remedy for it.

The presence of the Gibeonites in Israel in the first place was because of failure to enquire of the Lord (**Joshua 9:14-19**). David asked the Gibeonites how to atone for Saul's earlier slaying of their people. Saul had broken the league Joshua had made with them. Was David's method wise? Would it be wise for present-day leaders to use in the many serious events and problems having moral causes today? Is the failure to enquire of the Lord the cause of spiritual famine today? This is more fearful than the other. Why?

2 Samuel 21:5-6 The requirements of the Gibeonites were severe—the death of seven descendants of Saul. King David agreed. And **after that God was intreated for the land**. When the sin was out of the way, God heard their prayer. The famine was broken. This is the only way to break the famine of spiritual food in our world today.

God sends natural disasters to lead man in a certain direction. The things we see happen and read about today are not completely accidental. God uses them to get our attention. Each of us is responsible for enquiring into causes. When the cause is found, we must then seek the remedy.

The Remedy

The seven sons of Saul were innocent of the sin of killing the Gibeonites, yet their lives were given to atone for it. Their sacrifice was delegated—one person in place of another. It was accepted by God and because of it, He removed the penalty, the famine. This is a type of the atonement of Jesus Christ, the innocent One in place of the guilty. His dying removed the penalty of death by famine.

Does the sacrifice of these lives seem too severe, unjust? Was the death of Christ just? It was necessary because there was no other way for atonement to be made.

What is the nature of sin? Does God see it as a little mistake, or a death, corruption, separation, and abomination? He is **of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity**. For this reason **your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear** (**Habakkuk 1:13; Isaiah 59:2**). Because God loves us, He hates sin. He must deal with it exceedingly severely. We must view sin as God does. Sin is no small matter. The type we saw above is not too extreme.

JUST A THOUGHT

"Tragedy is not what we suffer but what we miss."

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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