

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Samuel: God's Shift Of Israel From Apostasy Under The Judges To David's Reign

II. 2 Samuel: The Reign Of David Over Israel

S. God's Use Of Humanly Unstoppable Wrongdoers To Discipline Us

(2 Samuel 16:15-18:16)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

It is easy to become anxious and fret over our inability to check humanly unstoppable wrongdoers we face:

(1) Chris Powell wrote how many Connecticut voters face such a challenge with state officials: (a) his article, "A vote for 'lockbox' is a vote for tolls" (Republican-American, June 16, 2017, p. 6A), claimed the state legislature's "transportation 'lockbox' amendment is a fraud because it would apply to transportation-related tax revenue only after the revenue actually was deposited in the state transportation fund. But ordinary legislation could divert such revenue to the General Fund *before* it was deposited in the Transportation Fund. Ordinary legislation also could define *any expenses* as transportation expenses," keeping the "lockbox" empty!

Mr. Powell added, "The 'lockbox' amendment was proposed and approved" because "the public seemed fairly aware of state government's long history of diverting supposedly dedicated funds," *Ibid.* So, regardless what many voters want, Mr. Powell concluded, "(E)very increase in state-government revenue, whether from tolls or taxes, makes inevitable only that state employees will keep getting paid to stay home on Columbus Day, and that Hartford city government will keep getting bailed out no matter how corrupt and inept it becomes." (*Ibid.*)

(b) Chris Powell also noted that "Chase T. Rogers, chief justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court, has urged the U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency to avoid making apprehensions of immigration-law violators at the state's courthouses," *Ibid.* Mr. Powell voiced the frustration of many voters by objecting to this, writing, "But . . . immigration-law enforcement is part of justice, too, and is appropriate wherever the law is being violated," *Ibid.*

(2) Locally, I heard two people in Fellowship Hall last Sunday express intense concern over problems that either they or a family member faces due to seemingly humanly unstoppable wrongdoers.

Need: *Accordingly, we ask, "How are we to respond to conflict we face with humanly unstoppable wrongdoers?!"*

- I. God let Absalom criminally take David's concubines as David fled from him, fulfilling prophecy that the Lord would thus discipline David due to his own past adultery and murder, 2 Sam. 16:15-23; 12:11-12:**
 - A. After David had committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered her husband Uriah so he could marry her, God predicted He would let another publicly appropriate David's harem to discipline him, 2 Samuel 12:11-12.
 - B. Thus, David's flight from the city while leaving ten concubines to keep his palace gave Absalom opportunity to fulfill this prophecy, and he committed the wicked crime against David and his harem, 2 Samuel 16:15-23.
- II. Absalom's crime also fulfilled 2 Samuel 7:14 in God's Davidic Covenant pledge to discipline the Davidic king with the rod of men, having other men afflict the king to teach him to avoid such sins in his future.**
- III. However, in line with the 2 Samuel 7:15 provision of the same Davidic Covenant, God then helped David and punished his foes for their roles in the crimes against him and his harem, 2 Samuel 17:1-18:16:**
 - A. God punished Ahithophel and Absalom for their roles in their capital crimes against David and his harem:
 1. God punished Ahithophel for counseling Absalom to commit these capital crimes:
 - a. For Ahithophel's 2 Samuel 16:20-23 advice that Absalom commit the crimes of (i) dishonoring his father (Ex. 20:12; 21:17) and (ii) dishonoring him as God's anointed king (Ex. 22:28) by (iii) committing adultery with David's harem (Ex. 20:14; Deut. 22:25), God overturned Ahithophel's second advice that Absalom pursue David quickly to defeat him when David was vulnerable to defeat, 2 Samuel 17:1-14.
 - b. When the intelligent Ahithophel witnessed Absalom and his followers reject his advice to pursue David and his men quickly, he likely realized God was opposing him, so he committed suicide, 2 Samuel 17:23.
 2. God punished Absalom for committing the capital crimes that Ahithophel had advised that he do:
 - a. The Lord arranged for Ahithophel's advice to be rejected in favor of Hushai's advice to preserve David and his people in their time of weakness so they could later defeat Absalom's followers, 2 Samuel 17:1-14.
 - b. In the end, David's men defeated Absalom's men (2 Samuel 18:6-7), and God used the rough, wooded terrain of the battlefield to kill more of Absalom's men than David's men slew, 2 Samuel 18:8.
 - c. God also thus arranged for Absalom's head to get caught in the thick boughs of an oak as he rode his mule under it, suspending him in midair so he could be subdued by David's men, 2 Samuel 18:9-16.
 - B. However, God helped David, His anointed king, that he might continue to fulfill God's will that he rule Israel:

1. God guarded the priestly couriers so they could get Hushai's warning to David to cross the Jordan quickly lest Absalom heed Ahithophel's word and rapidly pursue and defeat a weakened David, 2 Sam. 17:15-22:
 - a. David's spy, Hushai had gained Absalom's confidence, and he advised Absalom to wait to pursue David after all Israel was available to help him. However, Hushai also wanted to warn David to cross the Jordan River quickly lest Absalom chose to heed Ahithophel's advice and harm David, 2 Sam. 16:15-19; 17:7-13.
 - b. Accordingly, Hushai got the priestly couriers, Jonathan and Ahimaaz, to run to David to warn him to cross the Jordan immediately for safety, 2 Sam. 17:15-17. The runners were spotted by a lad who sided with Absalom and who told Absalom so that Absalom's servants tried to catch them, 2 Sam. 17:18a, 20a.
 - c. Nevertheless, a woman who supported David's cause hid the couriers in a well, she covered the well's mouth and spread grain over the cover to conceal them, so the couriers escaped to inform David of Hushai's message and David quickly crossed over the Jordan eastward, 2 Samuel 17:18b-19, 20b-22.
2. God also moved Hebrews and Gentiles east of the Jordan to supply livelihood provisions for David's people so they could be refreshed to face Absalom in battle, 2 Sam. 17:27-29: transjordan Hebrews and the Ammonite king Nahash supplied the goods, 2 Sam. 17:27-29; The MacMillan Bible Atlas, 1968, p. 70-71.
3. God kept David from fighting his son, He gave David victory and Absalom was slain, 2 Samuel 18:1-16.

Lesson: *In line with the Davidic Covenant, (1) God let His prophecy that another man publicly take David's harem be fulfilled to discipline David never again to commit adultery and murder, (2) to punish those involved in these crimes against David and his harem and (3) to protect His anointed king so he might fulfill God's calling.*

Application: *If we face humanly unstoppable wrongdoers, (1) may we realize that God is sovereign over all involved and (2) trust in Christ to be saved and come under God's care, John 3:16; Rom. 8:32. (3) We must then check Scripture to see if we have sinned to where God is using the unstoppable wrongdoers to discipline us to teach us to avoid such sin in our future, and heed that lesson well! (4) If we are not guilty of sin or if we have adjusted to God's discipline, may we rely on God to judge our foes' sin and help us so we can fulfill His assignments for us.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

(1) In our introduction, we noted Chris Powell's concerns that many state voters share in facing seemingly humanly unstoppable wrongdoers in state officials as taxes seem relentlessly to rise and be spent to pad the pockets of state employees and enable inept and corrupt functions in the city of Hartford. Also, the chief justice of the state Supreme Court promotes federal immigration-law violations at state courthouses, all of which is funded by taxpayers.

Though this is an unsavory situation for state citizens, I believe God has sovereignly allowed it to occur to discipline us to avoid viewing life in Connecticut as heaven, that we rather long for eternity with the Lord.

Here is why: recently, a citizen of our state shared with me his opinion that higher taxes are the price that we citizens of the state must be willing to pay for the privilege of living in the beautiful state of Connecticut!

However, in light of the Chris Powell article cited in our introduction, this claim fails since lots of tax moneys go to feed greed and enable administrative incompetence versus addressing voter needs. The claim fails since the application of federal immigration laws are being curtailed in courthouses by the chief justice of the state Supreme Court at the taxpayers' expense! Such wrongdoing is allowed by God to discipline us to cease looking at our state as heaven regardless how relatively beautiful the area is. We need to appreciate the much better righteous and equitable life in heaven to come versus putting our hope in this sinful realm of wrongdoing like 1 John 2:15-17 directs us to do!

(2) This same spiritual process occurs at the local level in our personal relationships: many times over the years in conversations various church members have had with me and in recalling my own life experiences have I noticed God allowing difficulties to arise in a relationship as a warning for a believer to put his guard up in that relationship that he avoid future sin or harm in his walk with the Lord.

We learned in our Prayer Meeting Bible study last Wednesday how this happened to the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah: in Jeremiah 9:1, he grieved over the pain his people faced due to God's judgment, but in verse 2, Jeremiah ambivalently shifted to assert his wish that he might leave his people for the desert due to their sin! God then warned Jeremiah, "'Beware of your friends; do not trust your brothers,'" for "'(y)ou live in the midst of deception; in their deceit they refuse to acknowledge Me,' declares the Lord," Jeremiah 9:4, 6 NIV.

If facing seemingly humanly unstoppable wrongdoers, may we (1) trust in Christ to be saved to obey God, Acts 17:30. (2) Then, may we (a) reflect to see what God may be trying to teach us about avoiding future sin and heartache by His permitting wrongdoers to afflict us, and (b) adjust. (c) May we also then trust God to supply all we need to fulfill His calling regardless what wrongdoers do, and focus on God's will for our lives.