



and that's... **The Gospel Truth!!** with Pat Corn

a brief message of encouragement to make your day just a little bit brighter

Often in today's world of turmoil, we often hear the phrase "under siege". For a city to be under siege all supply lines are cut in order to isolate the city, causing the city to weaken day by day. The infrastructure of electricity, gas, food, water, communications, and petroleum products must cease to be available. When under siege the city eventually is under the control of the aggressor. The following story is about an ancient city under siege. The story is found in 1 Samuel:11:1-11

The city of Jabesh Gilead of Israel had been placed under siege by the mighty Ammonite warrior, Nahash. The elders of that city begged for a treaty. In fact, they said that if Nabesh would spare their lives, they would make a treaty and they would become his servants.

Nahash agreed to honor their request on one condition; that they would consent to his gouging out the right eye of each one of them in order to "bring disgrace upon all of Israel".

These Jabesh Gilead wimps said that they would send out a message to all of Israel, but, if within seven days no one came to rescue them, they would surrender.

The messengers sent by the elders of Jabesh Gilead reached the city of Gibeah where Saul resided and spoke the terms of the agreement. Hearing the news, the people of Gibeah began to wail loudly just as Saul was coming in from the fields with his prize oxen. He asked why all these people were wailing and the news of the Ammonite intentions was given to him.

When Saul heard the words they spoke he got really ticked off. In fact, the Bible says that the "Spirit of God came upon him and he burned with anger". He was so ticked that he cut up two of his prized oxen and sent the pieces out to the regions of Israel with the proclamation that if anyone followed anyone but he and Samuel, their oxen would be cut to pieces just like the prized oxen of Saul's that they were observing at that moment.

The terror of the Lord fell upon the people of Israel and they turned out in unity as "one man". Saul mustered them at Bezek and the men of Israel numbered three hundred thousand and the men of Judah numbered thirty thousand. Pretty good turn out, huh?

Saul told the messengers from Jabesh Gilead to take this message to their elders, "By the time the sun is hot tomorrow, you will be delivered". When the messengers gave the elders that message, they were excited. They told the Ammonites that they would surrender to them the next day and the Ammonites could do with them whatever they pleased.

Saul broke the mass of men into three divisions and in the last hours of the night they slipped into the Ammonite camp and slaughtered them until the heat of the day. The Ammonites that survived were scattered such that no two of them were even left standing together. They ran for their lives.

Neat story. Huh? Oh sure, we all love the stories of winners, but that's not the essence of this story. The big question is, "Why would the Ammonites want to gouge out the right eye of the Israelites"? That single act would have a tremendous effect on Israel.

In our modern day experience it only sounds like a hideous thing to have done to you. Oh yes, it is but to a person in that day and time it had a far greater impact. You see, the weapon of choice for warrior in that day was the bow and arrow. Without their right eye, they would have no way to aim their arrows to fight an enemy. In other words, they would be rendered defenseless.

Try it, pretend you are shooting a bow and arrow and close your right eye. See? Well, you don't see, that's the whole point. Aren't you glad there no Ammonites in our land ready to put us under siege? Well, I hate to break the news to you, but there are Ammonites in our land!! Oh yes! There is one who stalks us like a roaring lion, seeking to cut us off from the infrastructure of our physical and spiritual lives. One who wishes to kill and destroy us. He wants to gouge out our right eye and destroy our vision and render us defenseless. His name is Satan. He and his principalities are real and alive and well in our country today.

How do we defend ourselves and squelch his plans? We need to do just as Saul did. He called his people together and their power came in great numbers. We need to do exactly the same. Come together and fight the enemy in our personal lives, corporate and governmental agencies. As Christians were are called to be united in one accord and raise a loud voice and cause the walls of sin in our world to fall and crush the enemy even as they are constructing them.

"Without vision....the people will perish"

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