

The Gibeonites Avenged

2 Samuel 21:1-14

by Don Falkos

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There was a famine that lasted for three years. The Lord told David, "Joshua swore an oath in my name to protect the Gibeonites. This famine is in response to Saul's zealous attempt to annihilate them."

David summoned the Gibeonites and asked, "What can I do to make amends and reconcile you with the Lord's people?"

The Gibeonites replied, "Well, money won't bring our families back, nothing will. The point is our complaint is not against all the people of Israel, just Saul. He tried to wipe us out; he drove us from our homes; and he established a regulation that forbids us our legal right to redress – blood for blood. So hand over seven of Saul's descendants. We'll execute them before the Lord."

Because of the oath he and Jonathan had sworn before the Lord, David spared Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan. But he gave the Gibeonites two of Saul's sons and five of his grandsons. The men of Gibeon killed and exposed them on a hill. All seven of them died together at the beginning of the barley harvest.

The mother of two of the men stayed near the bodies for months. She protected them, chasing away the birds during the day and wild animals during the night. David went to Jabesh Gilead and brought back the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan. Then the bones of the seven men the Gibeonites had executed were gathered up. Saul, Jonathan and the others were all given a proper burial.

After that, God ended the famine.