

# Collateral Damage and the Heart of God

## Part Eight

(Pebbles Make Waves)

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### Meditating on the Bible

#### Matthew 5:13-12

Blessed are the poor in spirit:

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn:

for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek:

for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness:

for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful:

for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart:

for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers:

for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake:

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

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#### Matthew 5:13-16

Ye are the salt of the earth:

but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Ye are the light of the world.

A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

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Almost always, the first ripple of the pebble of iniquity, as it enters the water of our possible reactions to adversity, is personal. Let us move, slowly, to understanding of this dynamic. First, realize that, your action (or inaction) is the pebble. Therefore, you--the pebble--receive the inward directed pressure of the recompense that precedes the outward ripple, or ripples. Your personal ripple is of this sort.

*And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty;*

...

(Exodus 34:6-7a)

... Once that inward pressure has been applied; ripples proceed outward, thusly: *visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.* (Exodus 34:7b)

So, in consideration of the first impact, add this to the waves of understanding: your family also needs to understand why the grace of God seems to have departed. The concept of, family, includes our congregational connection; for instance, as it was seen in Israel, as in the numbering of Israel by king David, Yes, the congregation, too, was a part of David's census experience. Scripture describes the extended need, for understanding in the congregation, as seen in the following recitation of king David's overreach of his authorization to administer the people of the LORD, as that overreach was done in the numbering of the children of Israel.

*And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.*

*And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it.*

*And Joab answered, The LORD make his people an hundred times so many more as they be: but, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?*

*Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab. Wherefore Joab departed, and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem.*

*And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah was four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword.*

*But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's*

*word was abominable to Joab.*

*And God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel.*

(1 Chronicles 21:1-7)

At that time, Israel was the base that needed understanding of its perceived-to-be undeserved collateral damage--portion one. To understand why we said, portion one; recall these words of Jesus Christ:

*I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

(John 10:14-16)

In the matter of the census of king David's time, too, there were *other sheep*. This massive group would also endure its own apportionment of collateral damage. Each ember of the group needed its supply of understanding of the Heart of God. The other sheep of that episode of history was described in a later time, here.

*Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake; (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house; Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.*

(1 Kings 8:41-43)

The collateral damage of the day of the census was instrumental in bringing about a rich blessing of understanding, for the entire world; for the purpose that king Solomon proclaimed: *that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee*. The generalized Scripture that describes the foreordaining of the blessing is this one.

*Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

(Genesis 12:1-3)

The specific trigger for the first projection of that blessing was activated here . . .

*And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite.*

(2 Samuel 24:18)

At that time, there was an expectancy that the LORD God would come, and make things right. Yes, a right thing did happen for Israel, in this day.

*And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.*

(2 Samuel 24:25)

However, in that day, the projection of, the fulfillment of the LORD God's blessing of understanding for the world, had not come, yet. The national character of Israel, as a projection of the glory of the LORD, was still being refined. For the other nations, fear of Israel was still their primary motivator. David was the living instrument that had been crafted by the LORD, to start the preparation for the expansion of the base. The inspiration to broaden the base of understanding is seen in this conversation.

*And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded.*

*And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground. And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant?*

*And David said, To buy the threshingfloor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people.*

*And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, here be oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood.*

*All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king.*

*And Araunah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept thee.*

*And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing.*

*So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.*

(2 Samuel 24:19-24)

That seems to be a relatively simple--possibly even, minor--transaction for a king. It does not seem to be so grandiose a thing, as to be a necessary precursor to the spread of the glory of God, among the other nations of that time. As to that though, remember this: for the LORD, even a small matter can produce majestic results. The relatively humble action of David, at *the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite* (also referred to as, *threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite*), set in motion such a majestic result, as comes from the LORD. Here, David speaks of the magnitude of the project.

*Then David said, This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.*

*And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God. And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance without weight; Also cedar trees in abundance: for the Zidonians and they of Tyre brought much cedar wood to David.*

*And David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the LORD must be exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it.*

*So David prepared abundantly before his death.*

(1 Chronicles 22:1-5)

As we read, above; again, David's pronouncement, as in the LORD'S broadcast to the other nations, began as an offering. Among these additional offerings, there was the foundational offering that king David had made to the LORD, during the remediation of his overreach, at the numbering of Israel. The place of the building of the temple is the spot that ended the collateral damage for Israel, as brought about by David's ill-timed census. It also benefited the people of king Solomon's day, in mitigation of any damage that would result from lapses of devotion in the congregation of Israel, of that day.

*Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite. And he began to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign.*

(2 Chronicles 3:1-2)

After a time, the image of, the understanding of the way of the LORD God of Israel, was perfected in that place.

*And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course: Also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:) It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD; So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.*

(2 Chronicles 5:11-14)

This was the establishment of a broad outreach into the world, starting in Israel; as was prescribed by the law of Moses, here.

*And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.*

(Exodus 12:48-49)

In that matter, David's part was, to be a warrior. Thus, David was not elected as the ambassador of the LORD for the purpose of drawing the world to Israel. This had been set in motion prior to his time. David's portion of Israel's ministry to the world was, to persuade the world that, the God of Israel is mighty. The quieter actions for drawing the world to God, as through Israel, was ordained for the time of David's son, king Solomon. However, neither king David, nor king Solomon, was the beginning of this quiet outreach. Wherefore; to understand the outreach to the world, we need to review the beginning.

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This outreach of God's grace for the world was a continuation of the stimulus that Moses brought to the world. Therefore, to get some insight into the origin of the behaviors of the time of king David, let us drop back to that time.

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In Moses day, a broad outreach was sent out, passing through Israel, as a forceful push toward their recognition of the glory of God. The central content of the stimulus was the

law of Moses. Also; corrections to the people were required, in that day. Thereby, the pattern for outreach was set in history. This is the pattern that David would apply to his day, as upon Israel, and out into the neighborhood. Among the templates in the pattern is a measure of collateral damage for the neighbors.

In the day of Moses, after Israel was established in its custodianship of the law of Moses; then, the push to broaden the base went into high gear, as among other nations. In that push, there were events of collateral damage in the nations. Please note that, this disruption of the nations was only done in accordance with the commandment of the LORD; such as occurred, here.

*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites: afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people.*

*And Moses spake unto the people, saying, Arm some of yourselves unto the war, and let them go against the Midianites, and avenge the LORD of Midian. Of every tribe a thousand, throughout all the tribes of Israel, shall ye send to the war.*

*So there were delivered out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand of every tribe, twelve thousand armed for war. And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of every tribe, them and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war, with the holy instruments, and the trumpets to blow in his hand.*

(Numbers 31:1-6)

Here is the measure of damage that was prescribed for the Midianites, in that day, as recompense for their offensive behavior.

*And they warred against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses; and they slew all the males. And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.*

(Numbers 31:7-11)

At this point, there is no obvious collateral damage. Up to this time, the damage is in the category; hazards of war. But, events continued, until we arrived here.

*And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods. And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire. And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, both of men and of beasts.*

(Numbers 31:9-11)

Then, there is this, an episode of collateral damage in the other nations. This is an image of the damage that would be visited upon nations; as in this fashion, here . . .

*And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the spoil, unto Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the camp at the plains of Moab, which are by Jordan near Jericho. And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp.*

*And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle.*

*And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD. Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves. And do ye abide without the camp seven days: whosoever hath killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain, purify both yourselves and your captives on the third day, and on the seventh day.*

(Numbers 31:12-19)

Such events, of inflicting collateral damage among the nations, were stimuli for national renewal in other nations--and, too, in Israel. However, Israel's renewing was not limited to observation of the other nations. The additional burden that Israel bore is the way it is for servants of the LORD that have an intensity of communion with God; such as, this one.

*So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.*

(Deuteronomy 32:12-14)

For servants of the LORD; they must endure an internal portion of disruption, as stimuli for the renewal of the group, or the individual. Wherefore Israel was subjected to this kind of additional apportionment of damage.

*But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown*



*thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.*

(Deuteronomy 32:15-18)

In some ways, it could be said that; the main apportionment of collateral damage was to Israel. We say that this is as in a proportional sense, in that; Israel was in danger of having its entire culture become collateral damage for the renewal of the world. This had been prophesied by Moses, in this time.

*And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters. And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.*

*I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs.*

*I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men:*

(Deuteronomy 32:19-26)

The scope of the, damage to come, was indicated by a warning, as included in a foretelling of the collateral that Israel would contribute to the spread of understanding, as directed through ripples in the base. In essence, the collateral would be this: all of Israel; minus a relatively small remnant. The larger portion would be detached from the body of Israel, as follows . . .

*And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.*

*And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and*

*cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you. And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours. And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.*

*Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.*

(Leviticus 26:27-35)

Here is the description of the environment of the much smaller portion that would escape elimination--though; they, too, would perceive that they were being significantly damaged.

*And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth. And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.*

*And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.*

(Leviticus 26:36-39)

In that detached portion of Israel's collateral; as contained in its collateral damage, the LORD used this, first transport, as the start of the wave that carried understanding of God's glory, unto the wider world.

*In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this word unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Thus saith the LORD to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck, And send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah; And command them to say unto their masters, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye*

*say unto your masters;  
I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.*  
(Jeremiah 27:1-7)

There were many times of Israel provocation of the LORD; such that, they cried out mightily for the LORD to strike out against Israel; such as, this one.

*And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.*

*And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.*

(Exodus 32:7-10)

There had been times when, the LORD had restrained His Hand, as in recognition of repentance. This could even be a result of a petition for remediation as coming from a single servant of the LORD; such as occurred, here.

*And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.*

*And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.*

(Exodus 32:11-14)

In the spread of the glory of the LORD God, there was, necessarily, no option that provided for on-demand mitigation. Mitigation was only served up as the LORD sent a wave of contrition through the populace. At such times, the power of transformation must surely go out. *At the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; that was one of those times.*

*And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: For they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land; and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish.*

*But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the LORD; and they shall till it, and dwell therein.*

(Jeremiah 27:8-11)

In the continuance, we will dissect this transport; along with, the critical part it played in sending out vines of understanding of the way of the LORD. For now; here is the prophetic overview of that first, external to Israel, transport, and three others that followed it.

*Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.*

*This image's head was of fine gold,  
his breast and his arms of silver,  
his belly and his thighs of brass,*

*His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.*

*Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.*

(Daniel 2:31-35)

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**Next In**

**Collateral Damage and  
The Heart of God**  
(Vines through the World)

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